

The FIRE SIGNALS OF LACHISH



STUDIES IN THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY
OF ISRAEL IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE,
IRON AGE, AND PERSIAN PERIOD
IN HONOR OF
DAVID USSISHKIN

EDITED BY ISRAEL FINKELSTEIN AND NADAV NA'AMAN

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David Ussishkin

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Winona Lake, Indiana
EISENBRAUNS
2011

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Printed in the United States of America.

www.eisenbrauns.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The fire signals of Lachish : studies in the archaeology and history of Israel in the late Bronze age, Iron age, and Persian period in honor of David Ussishkin / edited by Israel Finkelstein and Nadav Na'aman.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-1-57506-205-1 (hardback : alk. paper)

1. Israel—Antiquities. 2. Excavations (Archaeology)—Israel. 3. Bronze age—Israel. 4. Iron age—Israel. 5. Material culture—Palestine. 6. Palestine—Antiquities. 7. Ussishkin, David. I. Finkelstein, Israel. II. Na'aman, Nadav.

DS111.F57 2011

933—dc22

2010050366

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Introduction: David Ussishkin

David Ussishkin was born in Jerusalem in 1935 and was brought up in a devoted Zionist family. His grandfather was Menachem Ussishkin, one of the prominent Zionist leaders of the time, and his uncle, Simon Bodenheimer—a pioneer in the study of the fauna of the Land of Israel—was professor of zoology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He grew up in Rehavia, a well-to-do Jerusalem neighborhood, and attended the local gymnasium, where he received an excellent education.

After his military service (1953–55), David studied archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1955–61). He wrote his dissertation, entitled *The Neo-Hittite Monuments, Their Dating and Style*, under the supervision of Prof. Yigael Yadin and received his Ph.D. in 1966. During his studies, he participated in a number of excavations, including Chalcolithic Beer Sheba (1956), Tel Hazor (1958), Chalcolithic Azor (1958), Kültepe, Turkey (1959), Tel Megiddo (1960, 1965), “Cave of the Letters,” the Judean Desert (1960–61), En Gedi (1961–62), and Masada (1964–65). These excavations furnished him with remarkable experience and helped him formulate his own field methodology.

From 1966 until his retirement in 2004, David taught in the Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at Tel Aviv University. Between 1975 and 1978, he served as Chair of the Department, and between 1980 and 1984 as the Director of the Institute of Archaeology. In 1985, he was nominated full professor, and in 1996 he was nominated incumbent of the Austria Chair in Archaeology of the Land of Israel in the Biblical Period.

David has excavated some of the most important sites in Israel, most prominent among them Lachish, Jezreel, and Megiddo. These projects have shed light on the material culture and history of Israel and Judah, touching on the central dilemmas in the field of biblical archaeology. In his excavations, David developed a branch of biblical archaeology that can best be described as a bridge between the European-American archaeological methods and the Israeli archaeological method, both of which were dominant between the 1950s and the 1970s. David’s work is meticulously methodical and free of fixed thought patterns. He has never hesitated to undermine conventions or to attack “accepted” theories if they were not founded on hardcore evidence. He has never refrained from presenting trenchant questions, even when they deviated from the consensus. Moreover, he has never hesitated to dismiss opinions that he himself had expressed or to accept rejection of his own opinions by other scholars when new, opposing data appeared. Indeed, intellectual integrity is one of the trademarks of David’s scientific work. No wonder that he describes himself as the Hercule Poirot of archaeology—a detective who seeks the solution by looking at all the evidence without any preconceptions.

David's scientific activity is diversified. Themes he has dealt with include Chalcolithic art, Early Bronze Age temples, Middle Bronze Age fortifications, Egyptian dominance during the Late Bronze Age, the date of the Philistine settlement in Canaan, and the Iron Age II archaeology in northern and southern Israel. Another field he has researched is the archaeology and art history of Anatolia and northern Syria during the Iron Age.

The crowning achievement of David's scientific work is the excavation at Lachish. This is where he shaped his views on archaeological method, as well as his observations on the fine line between artifact and text—biblical or other. Tel Lachish is the most significant site in Judah for determining issues of material-culture sequence and chronology. David's meticulous methods and his analytical skills helped him to resolve several problems that had baffled research for many years. He brought to light decisive evidence for clarifying the nature of Egyptian dominance in Canaan and the time of its demise, and for the discussion of the date of the Philistine settlement in southern Canaan. Most significant for the archaeology of the Iron Age is his deciphering of the conundrums of the Lachish III destruction date, of the date of the *lmlk* seal impressions, and of the destruction of contemporaneous layers at other Judahite sites.

In addition, David has made important contributions to our understanding of the Northern Kingdom. Jezreel is presented in the Bible as a prominent center in the Kingdom of Israel in the days of the Omride dynasty, second only to the capital, Samaria. His excavations at Tel Jezreel (with John Woodhead of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem) contributed to our perception of the ways in which governing centers were established in Israel in the 9th century B.C.E. The results of the excavations stimulated the discussions on state formation in the Northern Kingdom and the effect of Hazael's conquests on the history of the Levant. His investigations in Jezreel also provoked the ongoing debate of past years regarding the chronology of Iron Age settlement strata at sites across Israel.

From the 1960s to the 1980s, David published several studies on the results of excavations at Tel Megiddo. From the beginning of the 1990s, he has been a co-director of the renewed excavations at the site (with Israel Finkelstein, Baruch Halpern, and Eric Cline). Over eight extensive seasons, the Megiddo team has recovered finds that shed light on numerous crucial subjects for the archaeology of Israel and its surrounding lands: the layout and date of the Early Bronze Age temples; the destruction of the Late Bronze Age city; the nature of the Iron Age I city; the dating of Iron Age strata; the conquest of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria; and the nature of the 7th-century B.C.E. Assyrian provincial center at the site.

One of David's most influential publications is his exhaustive study of Sennacherib's conquest of Lachish (1982), pertaining to various subjects connected with this event—namely, Sennacherib's reliefs from Nineveh, the Assyrian king's annals, the biblical evidence, and the results of Lachish's excavations. David's book on the Iron Age cemetery at Silwan opened a window on the study of burial traditions of the Jerusalem elite during the late Iron Age. With the meager data available on monumental building in Jerusalem and in the peripheral Judahite towns, the rock-

cut tombs at Silwan present most significant evidence of Judahite architecture and of foreign influences on the culture of Judah during the late Iron Age.

The most prominent of David's publications is the final report of the renewed excavations at Lachish. He compiled and edited the works of dozens of researchers from many fields of archaeology and other scientific disciplines and himself wrote many chapters, publishing a five-volume exhaustive report and achieving the utmost in quality and standard. This monumental undertaking is David's magnum opus.

Tel Aviv, the Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University, is one of two periodicals in Israel that introduce the world to archaeological research in Israel. During *Tel Aviv's* first three years, David served as one of its three editors. For the next 27 years, from 1977 through 2004, he served as the sole editor of the journal. It is no exaggeration to say that he alone is responsible for shaping *Tel Aviv's* nature and for maintaining its high level throughout the years.

David has never evaded his public responsibilities. For many years he was a member of the Board of Directors of Yad Ben Zvi in Jerusalem. For the past 25 years, he has also been a member of the Board of Directors of the Israel Exploration Society and the Israel Archaeology Council.

David married in 1964 and has three children: Iddo, a physicist; Yoav, a lawyer; and Daniel, a historian. He has six grandchildren. In addition to fulfilling his obligations as grandfather, he is still very active and the archaeology community can expect that his desk will produce many more important studies in the future.

On a personal note, we were delighted to edit this book for David—a friend, colleague, and field-partner for many years—on the occasion of his 75th birthday. We have always enjoyed David's amity, scientific observations, sense of humor, and talents as a storyteller. And David, with his cynical smile, has always accepted our at-times skeptical criticism of some of his observations.

ISRAEL FINKELSTEIN and NADAV NA'AMAN
October 2010

David Ussishkin, List of Publications

A. Books

1. *The Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib*. Publications of the Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, No. 6. Tel Aviv, 1983, 135 pp., 101 figs.
2. *The Village of Silwan, The Necropolis from the Period of the Judean Kingdom*, Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi and the Israel Exploration Society, 1986, 311 pp., 211 figs. (Hebrew). *English Edition*: Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1993, 364 pp. 211 figs.
3. D. Ussishkin, editor and principal author, *The Renewed Archaeological Excavations at Lachish (1973–1994)*. With contributions by 61 authors. Monograph Series of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University 22. Tel Aviv, 2004, 2820 pp., including ca. 730 figure pages.

B. Articles

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Indelible Impression: Petrographic Analysis of Judahite Bullae

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Introduction

Little of what was undoubtedly a vast store of written letters and legal documents from the kingdom of Judah has been preserved in the archaeological record. Although a number of inscriptions marked on ostraca and seals have been found from the Iron Age, it may safely be assumed that the great majority of texts were written on scrolls or papyri that did not survive. The sources refer to these scribal records, but we must assume that they have been lost forever. All that remains of these texts are the clay sealings, or “bullae,” that were once attached to them.

Bullae are small lumps of clay, often the size of a fingernail, and shaped as flat disks. They were usually affixed to a cord binding a papyrus document and then stamped with a seal. Only a relatively small number of bullae have been found in the course of over a century of archaeological exploration of the major Iron Age sites of Judah (Avigad 1997: 167–241). There are several reasons for this: First, they are very small; such tiny clay objects can easily escape the attention of inexperienced workers not searching specifically for them. Second, careful sifting was not always a common practice at many of the large-scale excavations of the major Judahite tells. Finally, unfired bullae stand little chance of survival in the subhumid conditions of the southern Levant. Most of the bullae found in recorded excavations, therefore, were discovered as part of very few caches that had survived due to specific depositional conditions.

Though it was suggested in the past that the provenance of bullae could be determined by petrographic analysis (Deutsch 1997: 15), due to the relatively large sample size that such analyses required this was not possible at the time. During the last decade, however, one of us (Goren) developed a methodology for petrographic examination of delicate clay objects, such as cuneiform tablets and bullae. It was

Authors' note: The analytical part of this study was supported by a grant from the Horowitz Foundation on behalf of the Interdisciplinary Center for the Conservation and Study of Historical Heritage in Israel (ESHMOR). We would like to thank Michal Dayagi-Mendels of The Israel Museum, Fawzi Ibrahim of the Rockefeller Museum, and Hava Katz, Michael Saban, and Debi Ben-Ami of the Israel Antiquities Authority for enabling us to study the bullae. Oded Lipschits read the draft of this article and made useful comments.

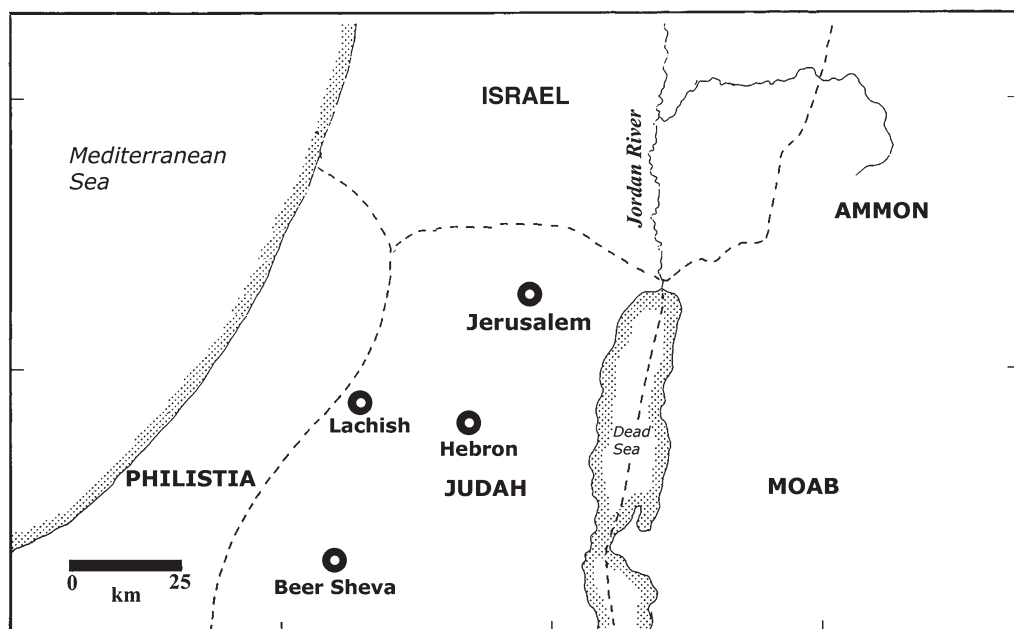


Fig. 1. Jerusalem and the boundaries of Judah in the Late Iron Age.

used for provenance studies of cuneiform tablets from Amarna (Goren, Finkelstein, and Naʾaman 2004), Ugarit (as-yet unpublished), and Israel (Goren, Finkelstein, and Naʾaman 2004; Goren et al. 2007, 2008), and the so-called Knossian Replica-Rings from Crete and Thera (Goren and Panayiotopoulos in preparation).

The Database: Judahite Bullae from Controlled Excavations

The bullae sampled in our research include two main groups found in Jerusalem and Lachish (Fig. 1), as well as some other items. The first group, comprising 51 items, was uncovered during the 1982 season of excavations in Area G at the City of David by Shiloh (1984: 19–20; 1986; Shiloh and Tarler 1986) and was published by Shoham (2000) and Brandl (2000). At the base of the famous stepped stone structure, a series of buildings had been erected during the 7th century B.C.E. They spread over two terraces: the “House of Ahiel” and the “Burnt Room” were found on the upper terrace while on the lower one stood the “Bullae House.” The floor of the latter, only partly excavated, was covered by a thick charred destruction layer containing the bullae together with pottery vessels, arrowheads, a scale weight, and four limestone altars. The finds are typical of the final stage of the Iron Age and the bullae found in this context clearly date to the last phase in the history of Judah, before the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. Most of the bullae are in a very good state of preservation, hence fully legible; four are unepigraphic. They bear dozens of Hebrew personal names, two of which belong to figures known from the Bible—Gemaryahu son of Shaphan (Shoam 2000: 33, B 2), a high official

in the court of King Jehoiakim, and ‘Azaryahu son of Ḥilkiyahu (Shoam 2000: 43, B 27), probably a member of a priestly family mentioned in the books of Chronicles (Schneider 1988).

The second group of bullae examined in our research is comprised of 17 items discovered by Aharoni at Tel Lachish in the late 1960s (Aharoni 1975: 19–22, Pls. 20–21). The bullae were attributed to Level II, dating to the end of the First Temple period. They were found inside a pottery juglet (Aharoni 1975: 47: 27) that is typologically identical to a vessel found in the “Bullae-House” in the City of David (Shiloh 1986: fig. 6: 11). The Lachish juglet was found in a small storeroom along with a rich pottery assemblage that dated to the same time as material found at the “Bullae-House” in Jerusalem. In the same storeroom at Lachish, an ostrakon bearing personal names and six marked shekel weights were also found. It should be noted that in both the “Bullae-House” and at Lachish the bullae had been deposited together with weighing facilities. The Lachish bullae were not fired and thus are generally in a poor state of preservation; only seven are legible. One bears the name of Shevanyahu, the servant or son of the king (Aharoni 1975: 21, Pl. 20: 5), clearly a high official operating within the administrative or clerical system of Judah.

Very few additional Judahite bullae¹ have come to light in recorded excavations. Two were found by the British expedition at Lachish (Tufnell 1953: 348; Pls. 44A: 172–73, 45: 172–73), and another one was retrieved from Beth-Zur (Sellers and Albright 1931: 8–9). In both cases, the excavation recording techniques and publication methods were inadequate by today’s standards, and the contexts of the bullae are unclear. Three additional bullae were found at Tell el-Ḥesi (O’Connell 1977), at E. Mazar’s excavations in the City of David (Mazar 2007: 67–69), and during a project conducted by Barkay and Zweig, involving the sifting of debris from the Temple Mount (Shanks 2006). All three were discovered out of their original context. About four years ago, Reich and Shukron reported the discovery of nearly 170 bullae, dating to the late 9th–8th centuries B.C.E. near the Gihon Spring in the City of David (Reich, Shukron, and Lerna 2007: 156–57). Since Reich and Shukron’s bullae have not yet been published, they are beyond the scope of this article.²

Method

Our study aimed at investigating some as-yet undetermined aspects of the Judahite bullae. Since it is widely believed that bullae were used to seal documents sent from one authority to another, ensuring that the message would be read by the recipient only, we first attempted to disclose the geographical origin of the bullae through the provenance of their clays. This was done in order to map the so-called administrative correspondence network in Judah at the end of the Iron Age. By

1. In the territory of the Northern Kingdom of Israel only a meager number of bullae were found. Most of them were retrieved in Samaria (Crowfoot 1957: 88, Pl. XV: 29, 38) and Megiddo (Sass 2000: 408, Fig. 12.44: 1–3). All bear only iconographic motifs.

2. Four additional bullae that were found in Tel Batash (Brandl 2001: 268–69), Beer-sheba (Aharoni 1973: 75–76), Ḥorvat ‘Uza (Beck 2007), and Mezad Ḥazeva (Cohen and Yisrael 1995: 23), probably sealed bags or boxes and not papyri, and thus were not sampled in our research.

doing so, we hoped to reveal the location of several personalities and to map the network of Judahite bureaucracy. The first step in our research, therefore, was to determine whether the material composition of a given assemblage of bullae would reflect sufficient similarity to justify their assignment to a single site or whether the analysis would show that they were made of clays from different locations. This was the key to the research questions that would follow: If the raw materials were sufficiently similar, then the research that followed would relate to the issue of provenance of the entire lot. If they were diverse, then the study would have to focus on the correlation of the clay types with the textual and stylistic characteristics of the bullae and the location of their discovery. As in standard provenance studies of ceramics in archaeology, it would be naive to expect that the mineralogical or chemical analyses of small samples of clay would enable provenance determinations to the single site. Moreover, there are obviously some fundamental differences between bullae and pottery, and, consequently, between the preferences of potters and scribes or other officials. However, as is the case with pottery, the background of the study of bullae is such that the interpretation of the results can be narrowed by many archaeological and historical considerations. In fact, the distribution of the Judahite Late Iron Age sites where bullae could have been issued and used is such that it leaves only very few possibilities open, if the analysis were to suggest even a general area within the confines of Judah. This is due to the diversity of soil types and clay formations that expose in the Jerusalem area, around Lachish, in other parts of the Shephelah and in the Beer Sheba Valley.

As a result, we established two stages for our research project. In the first stage, we examined the structural and technical aspects of the bullae based on surface microscopic observations under magnifications ranging between 10 and 100 times. This was done in order to record minute details of the papyrus and the cord impressions, the fingerprints and other imprints, and, of course, of the seal impressions themselves. These examinations attempted to address some technical questions, such as the general composition of the fabric and the production process. In the second stage of our research, minute samples were extracted from the bullae and examined in thin sections under the petrographic microscope, the environmental scanning electron microscope (ESEM), and by the attached energy dispersive spectrometer (EDS). The environmental scanning electron microscope was chosen because it does not require any significant sample preparation or coating with conducting materials such as gold or graphite; hence, the samples could be further analyzed by x-ray diffraction (XRD), in order to define the clay minerals that cannot be identified by petrography.

Technology

A study of the reverse side and edges of the bullae under the microscope revealed the imprint of the papyrus and the cord that had tied it and around which the clay bulla had been attached. This trivial point has already been noted by scholars dealing with the matter. However, relatively little attention has been directed to-

ward the process of bulla production, as reflected by the microscopic details of the sealings. It is clear that some of the discussions of the way bullae were used to seal documents were influenced by the more current use of sealing wax. However, the properties of wax are completely different from those of clay, and therefore the two should not be compared. Moreover, the modern custom of using lead bullae is also different from that of clay sealing. In contrast to ceramic production, clay bullae technology is now extinct, and our knowledge cannot be supported by any ethnographic or other analogical data. Nevertheless, microscopic analysis has proven helpful. Two types of cord impressions can usually be distinguished on the reverse side of the sealings: a set of impressions of cords that were not completely encased by the clay but only touched it and hollows that were created by cords that were completely embedded within the clay. Both sets of cord impressions were separated by the two different layers of clay, which were put one above the other when wet, with the cord rolled between them and under the lower one. In the process, fingerprint marks were always left around the edges, reflecting a series of pressings in order to shape the final contour of the sealing.

In an attempt to explain the possible method used to form the bullae, Brandl (2000) suggested that they were made of an elongated, flat, ovoid lump of clay. This lump was placed over the cord that had been rolled several times around the papyrus. Then the cord was tied over the clay, which in turn was folded over the knot and pressed in order to seal it. Then the clay was sealed while still wet and set to harden. Brandl's observations represent the first attempt to examine closely the pattern of bullae construction through careful examination of their details. Yet our microscopic examinations revealed a somewhat different pattern, which will be described below.

In order to understand better the meaning of the minute features seen on the bullae surfaces and the cross sections seen on broken items, we simulated the sealing process with the aid of a papyrus, a string, a seal made of dental wax and attached to a ring, and some potter's clay (Fig. 2a). Our attempts to press a lump of clay against the cord tying the papyrus, seal it, and let it harden, did not yield the above microstructure. Moreover, after hardening, the bulla usually detached from the papyrus and the cord due to shrinkage that resulted from the loss of water.

Nor did our reconstruction attempts using Brandl's method (2000) yield satisfactory results. While the microstructure of the cord impressions was sometimes in agreement with the pattern seen in some of the archaeological specimens, the overall shape of the resulting bullae was different. While folding the flat, oval lump of clay, a flat facet was created on one side of it, which was never observed in the original items even if, as Brandl suggested, it was smoothed by fingers. Moreover, the orientation of the cords crossing the bullae was not always parallel to the ones impressed on it from behind. Although it is clear that bullae must have been shaped by two layers of clay in order to provide the double impression of the cords, this could not be done by folding one lump of clay in half. However, when we applied some changes to this method, which will now be described, the simulated sealing exhibited exactly the same pattern as the ancient bullae (Fig. 2).

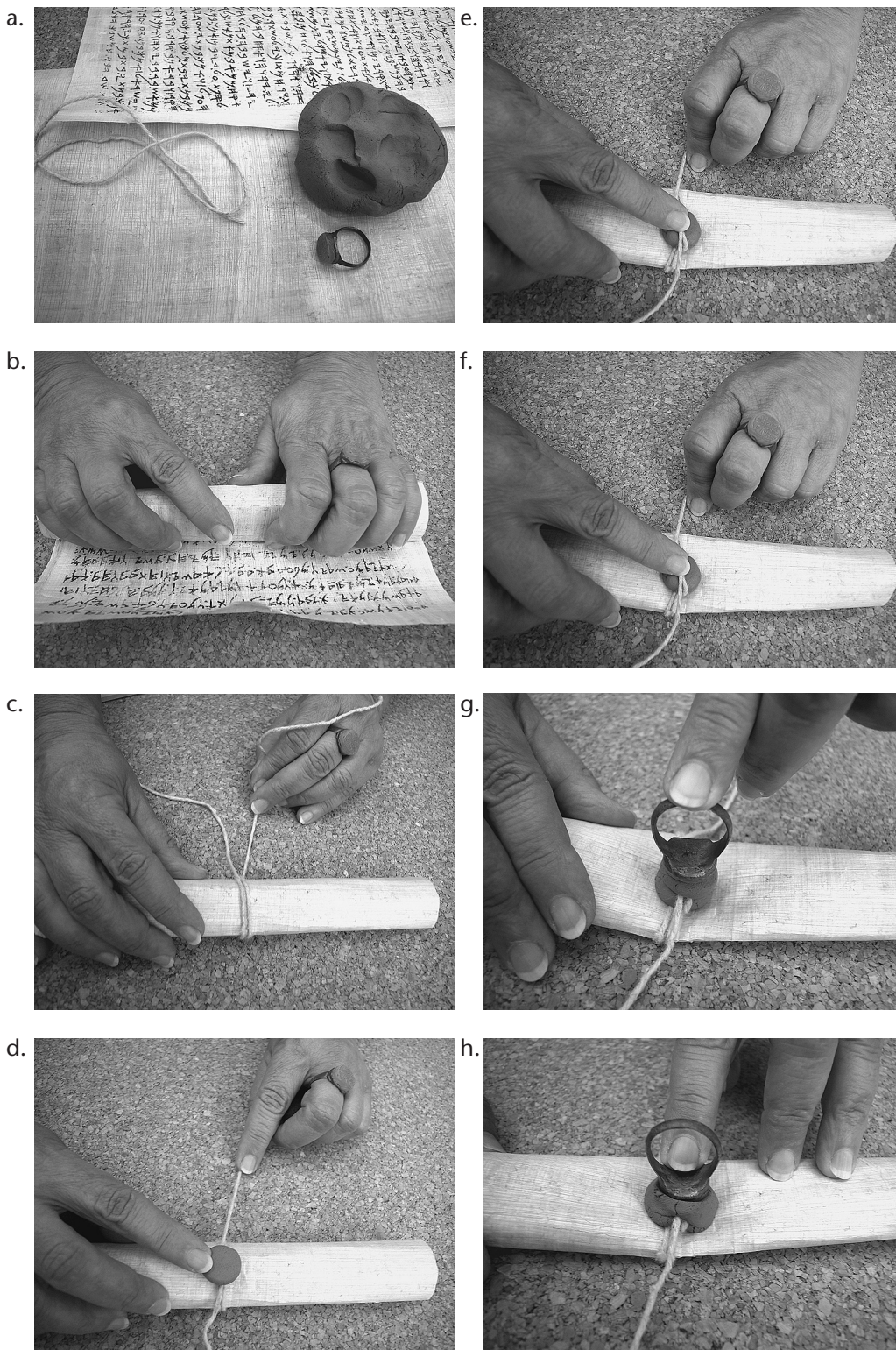




Fig. 2 (opposite, above). Simulation of the production process of a Judahite bulla (see text for details). Hand modeling by Nettah Halperin.

First, the papyrus was partly or completely rolled or folded (Fig. 2b). The cord was then wrapped around it several times (Fig. 2c). Next, a lump of clay was pressed against the cord (Fig. 2d). The cord was then wrapped twice around both the papyrus and the lump of clay (Fig. 2e). After this, another lump of clay was placed over the cord and the first lump and pressed onto them (Fig. 2f). The top of the cone was then impressed with the sealing ring (Fig. 2g). While the ring was still pressed into the clay, the edges of the bulla were smoothed by fingers, leaving a set of fingerprints all around (Fig. 2h). The seal was then removed, leaving the clay bulla securely attached to the folded and tied document (Figs. 2i–2j). After drying, it became impossible to open the document without breaking the bulla or cutting the cord. Our examinations indicate that all the Iron Age bullae from recorded excavations that we have thus far examined were formed by this method. This order of actions seems to have escaped the attention of most scholars who had previously studied Judahite bullae.³

Results

Based on the petrographic data, combined with preliminary results of the XRD and ESEM analyses, the raw material of all the examined specimens are readily identified as derived from soil deposits which are, in fact, Quaternary alluvial beds derived from terra rosa, rendzina, or loess soils. It should be emphasized that none of the bullae that we have examined thus far were made of pure clay or marl formations, even though these were extensively used for pottery production in the Judahite highlands, the Shephelah, and the northern Negev throughout the ages.

3. In February 2007, while discussing this reconstruction with Professors Ingo Pini and Walther Müller of the University of Marburg, who have studied thousands of Aegean bullae, we learned that independently they had come to the same conclusions regarding Aegean bullae; we thank them for this as-yet unpublished information.

Table 1. The analyzed bullae⁴

	<i>Publication</i>	<i>IAA No.</i>	<i>Site⁵</i>	<i>Petrography</i>
1	Shoam 2000: B 1	1984-135	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
2	Shoam 2000: B 2	1984-136	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
3	Shoam 2000: B 3	1984-137	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
4	Shoam 2000: B 4	1984-163	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
5	Shoam 2000: B 5	1984-158	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
6	Shoam 2000: B 6	1984-140	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
7	Shoam 2000: B 7	1984-139	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine quartz sand.
8	Shoam 2000: B 8	1984-138	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
9	Shoam 2000: B 9	1984-144	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
10	Shoam 2000: B 10	1984-153	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
11	Shoam 2000: B 11	1984-142	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
12	Shoam 2000: B 12	1984-145	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
13	Shoam 2000: B 13	1984-146	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
14	Shoam 2000: B 14	1984-147	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
15	Shoam 2000: B 15	1984-141	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
16	Shoam 2000: B 16	1984-148	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with ferruginous oolith.
17	Shoam 2000: B 17	1984-154	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
18	Shoam 2000: B 18	1984-143	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
19	Shoam 2000: B 19	1984-152	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
20	Shoam 2000: B 20	1984-151	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
21	Shoam 2000: B 21	1984-124	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
22	Shoam 2000: B 22	1984-150	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with large Nari inclusion.
23	Shoam 2000: B 23	1984-155	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
24	Shoam 2000: B 24	1984-157	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
25	Shoam 2000: B 25	1984-156	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
26	Shoam 2000: B 26	1984-159	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
27	Shoam 2000: B 27	1984-165	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
28	Shoam 2000: B 28	1984-125	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
29	Shoam 2000: B 29	1984-162	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
30	Shoam 2000: B 30	1984-161	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
31	Shoam 2000: B 31	1984-160	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
32	Shoam 2000: B 33	1984-167	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with limestone sand.

⁴ Two complete bullae were not sampled since they were too thin, and hence the sample could have caused them damage: 1984-166 (B 32) from the City of David and an unreadable bulla from Lachish 1968-252/14.

⁵ COD = The City of David.

	<i>Publication</i>	<i>IAA No.</i>	<i>Site</i> ⁵	<i>Petrography</i>
33	Shoam 2000: B 35	1984-168	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
34	Shoam 2000: B 36	1984-164	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
35	Shoam 2000: B 37	1984-130	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
36	Shoam 2000: B 38	1984-131	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
37	Shoam 2000: B 39	1984-132	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
38	Shoam 2000: B 40	1984-133	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with quartz inclusion.
39	Shoam 2000: B 41	1984-126	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty, large limestone grain.
40	Shoam 2000: B 42	1984-128	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
41	Shoam 2000: B 43	1984-129	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with limestone and quartz.
42	Shoam 2000: B 45	1984-123	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
43	Shoam 2000: B 46	1984-149	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
44	Shoam 2000: B 47	1984-127	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
45	Shoam 2000: B 49	1984-134	COD, Jerusalem	Terra rosa, silty.
46	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 1	1968-252/1	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess with quartz sand.
47	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 2	1968-252/2	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess with quartz and Nari sand.
48	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 3	1968-252/3	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess with quartz sand.
49	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 4	1968-252/4	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess.
50	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 5	1968-252/5	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess.
51	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 6	1968-252/6	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess.
52	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 7	1968-252/7	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess with Nari and mollusc frag.
53	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 8	1968-252/8	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess.
54	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 9	1968-252/9	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess with quartz sand.
55	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 20: 10	1968-252/10	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess.
56	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 21: 11	1968-252/11	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess.
57	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 21: 12	1968-252/12	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess with quartz sand.
58	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 21: 13	1968-252/13	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess.
59	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 21: 15	1968-252/15	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess.
60	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 21: 16	1968-252/16	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess with quartz sand.
61	Aharoni 1975: Pl. 21: 17	1968-252/17	Tel Lachish	Alluvial loess with quartz and Nari sand.
62	Sellers and Albright 1931: 8	1931-68	Beth-Zur	Terra rosa, silty with fine limestone sand.
63	Tufnell 1953: Pl. 44A: 172	1936-2258	Tel Lachish (Tufnell)	Alluvial loess with quartz sand.

The petrographic analysis revealed that the entire group of bullae from the City of David in Jerusalem (Table 1: 1–45) was made of terra rosa soil, having the same mineralogical composition of silt and sand temper. This fabric (Fig. 3a) is typified by orange-tan to reddish-tan matrix in thin section, which is highly optically active and silty. The silt is mainly quartzitic but it often contains some accessory heavy minerals. In the coarser fabrics sand is mixed within the same matrix (Fig. 3b), comprised mainly of limestone and quartz. Other minerals or rock fragments that sometimes appear in the inclusions are chert or chalcedony. Although terra rosa soils are abundant in the Mediterranean, subhumid parts of Israel, where they develop on hard limestone and dolomite of the Mediterranean climatic zones, the uniform composition of the silt with its accessory minerals and the coarse fraction suggest that the assemblage is the product of a single location. Moreover, this composition is identical to the fabric of the numerous local pillar figurines from the City of David (Goren, Kletter, and Kamaishi 1996). Therefore, the entire set of bullae from the City of David may be regarded as the local production of this site.

Under the petrographic microscope, the bullae from Lachish (Table 1: 46–61) are again very homogenous, but they differ significantly from the Jerusalem bullae. They exhibit silty, calcareous clay matrix and inclusions of sand of calcareous rock fragments together with some quartz. The silty component contains mainly quartz but also a recognizable quantity of heavy minerals. The nonplastic assemblage includes foraminiferous chalk together with occasional chert and quartz and rounded mollusc shell fragments. Based on a large body of published data, the matrix is readily identified as alluvial loess soil, which occurs in Israel mainly in the northern Negev and the southern Shephelah. Studies of ceramics assigned to this group demonstrate that the use of alluvial loess with chalk and Neogene rounded mollusc shell fragments as inclusions is prevalent mainly at sites in the southern Shephelah. A study of the composition and provenance of the el-Amarna letters (Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 287–89), revealed that the Lachish letters were made of the same mixture as the bullae under discussion. Moreover, the same composition dominates the assemblage of unfired vessels found at the potter's workshop at Tel Lachish (Magrill and Middleton 1997, 2004). Therefore, the bullae from Lachish may be considered a local product.

Petrographic examination of the other bulla from Lachish (Table 1: 63) revealed the same features as in the main Lachish group. The examination of the bulla from Beth-Zur (Table 1: 62) indicated that it was made of terra rosa soil with calcareous and quartz inclusions, similar to the Jerusalem bullae. Yet since this soil type exposes also at Beth-Zur, and as the sample taken from this bulla was extremely small, no further conclusions could be drawn.

To sum up this section, the entire assemblage of bullae from the City of David was most likely made locally in the Jerusalem area, whereas the Lachish bullae were all made locally in or around Lachish.

Discussion and Conclusions

Is it possible to define better the nature of bureaucratic networks in Judah according to the new evidence? The fact that all the bullae found were made of clay

from the sites where they were deposited negates the assumption that they sealed documents that were dispatched from far-off locations. Instead, it appears that either the bullae sealed locally circulated documents restricted to the immediate surroundings of the city in which they were found or that they were used to seal local legal and administrative documents.

The contents of the Lachish ostraca (Torczyner 1938), which date to the same period as the bullae sampled in our research, indicate that letters written on papyrus were sent together with ostraca. Na'aman's analysis of the archive of Ya'ush points out that the ostraca uncovered at the gate of Lachish were part of a much broader correspondence, most of which was written on papyri (Na'aman 2003: 175, 179). The assumption that letters were written on papyri is reinforced by the Wadi Murabba'at document, the only provenanced Iron Age papyrus found thus far in the southern Levant (Milik 1961: 93–100). Although it is a palimpsest and its text is fragmentary, it is clear that it was a personal letter. Hence, it seems that, while ostraca are more frequent than papyri in the archaeological record, they substituted for papyri only for economic reasons, while the latter constituted the common writing material.

Can we thus assume that the bullae in question represent a local correspondence? Additional data may help in our interpretation. Two important archives of papyri dated to the Persian period, hence somewhat later than our case, were unearthed in our region. The first, dated to the 5th century B.C.E., was discovered at Elephantine in Upper Egypt (Porten 1992, 1996). It consists of almost 100 Aramaic documents from several private and communal archives that were mostly composed of contracts and letters. The second archive was found in a cave in Wadi ed-Daliyeh, in the desert east of Samaria (Cross 1974; Lapp 1974; Leith 1997; Gropp 2001). It has been dated to the 4th century B.C.E. and contained 18 legal documents, all written in Aramaic. In these two groups, found in areas of extreme aridity, some papyri were discovered with their bullae still attached (Kraeling 1953: Pl. 21; Gropp 2001: Pls. 1–3, 17). Their perfect state of preservation and their proximity in time to the late Iron Age may hint at the possible contents of sealed papyri in the Iron Age.

The papyri from Elephantine and Wadi ed-Daliyeh illustrate the sealing practices used in the Persian period. After the text was written and witnessed, it was rolled from bottom to top, flattened, and folded. Strings and pieces of papyrus-fiber were looped around separately to tie the documents, which in turn were sealed by the bullae.

A comparison between the letters and the contracts found in Elephantine made by Porten (1992: 447–48) indicates some significant technical differences, which are relevant to our case: letters were shorter than contracts and unlike contracts, they were usually written on both sides of the papyrus. While contracts were rolled up and folded in thirds, letters were rolled up and folded in half. Since contracts were meant to be stored for an extended period of time, a blank space at the top of the contract assured against external damage that might obliterate any part of the opening lines. These differences illustrate the special treatment of legal documents, most likely due to their long-term importance, as opposed to letters.

The archives from Elephantine and Wadi ed-Daliyeh demonstrate that most of the sealed documents were formal legal records, which were concerned with the

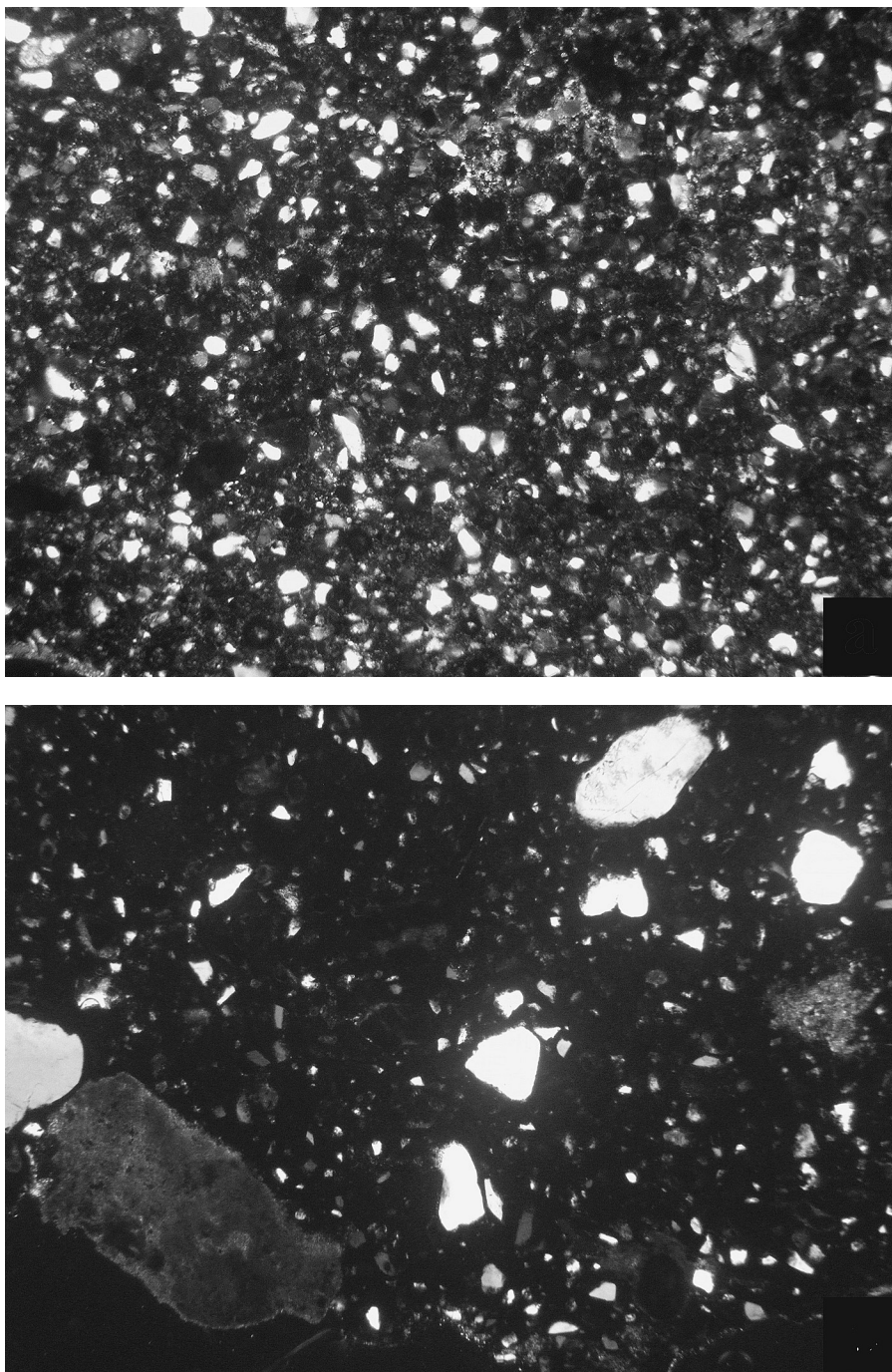


Fig. 3. Typical fabrics of bullae in thin sections under the petrographic microscope, field width: 2.5 mm, crossed polarizers. A: fine fabric including ferruginous dark matrix with quartz silt (white bodies throughout the field). B: coarser fabric with quartz sand (white rounded bodies) and limestone (darker body at lower left corner).

most personal forms of social interaction (e.g., marriage contracts, wills, and loans). The impression of personal seals upon these papyri was thus a highly complex act assuring the individuals involved that the contents of the document would thenceforth be considered valid in the eyes of the authorities. A seal impression therefore established a set of legal and moral obligations which bound those involved. Breaking or forging a seal was illegal.

Therefore, we join the opinion first presented by Avigad (1997: 33–39) and Shiloh (1986: 36–37), who assumed that Judahite bullae were used as sealings of legal documents. The facts that both in Jerusalem and Lachish the bullae were found in rooms together with standard weights and that in Lachish an ostrakon was also associated with the bullae strengthens this assumption, since these rooms may have functioned as the place where legal affairs physically took place and where the documents were written, sealed, and stored.

In order to support this hypothesis, a brief cross-cultural account of sealing practices of legal documents is required. The most informative biblical description of the preparation of a deed of sale in the late Iron Age is found in the book of Jeremiah (32:1–15). It concerns the purchase of a field by Jeremiah just a few days before the Babylonian conquest. The story reveals the technical features of the legal bureaucracy operating during the days of the Judahite bullae examined in our research. Although Jeremiah's purchase was symbolic in nature, the description of the legal process by which deeds were carried out at that time is most likely accurate. Two texts, an original and a duplicate, were written on two separate sheets of papyrus. The first was termed the "sealed deed" because it was rolled up and sealed with a bulla or bullae; it would be opened before judicial authorities only if absolutely necessary. The second, the "open deed," was a copy of the sealed one and was intended for daily use.

In ancient Mesopotamia (Renger 1977: 76–77) a clay tablet of a legal document was sealed both by the parties and witnesses. Scribes and craftsmen who produced seals often also sealed legal documents. As means of guaranteeing the authenticity of a legal document written on a clay tablet during the 3rd and 2nd millennia B.C.E., the tablet was placed in an envelope of clay on which the text of the document was repeated. Seals were impressed on both the original document and the envelope. During the Neo-Babylonian period, envelopes were no longer in use. Instead, two identical copies of the contract were issued, sealed, and given to each of the parties. Whenever a dispute over the agreement arose, the unbroken envelope containing the tablet or the two identical copies of the contract would be presented to a judge.

In the Hittite Empire, as in ancient Mesopotamia, clay tablets containing legal texts were sealed in order to authenticate their content (Marazzi 2000). In addition, bullae were attached to legal and administrative documents written on wooden tablets, and sometimes they were attached to a special hole in the lower part of clay tablets (Herbordt 2005: 36–39). The importance of the sealing of legal documents in the Hittite Empire is best represented in several texts that deal with the validity of a contract that was improperly sealed or where the seal was positioned incorrectly. In each case, the legal status of the contract was nullified (Marazzi 2000: 82).

From the Hellenistic period and on, legal documents were written in the form of the “double document” (Vandorpe 1996: 232–39): the original text was first written on the upper part of a papyrus sheet, usually in a small, particularly cursive script. Then the scribe left a blank space and again wrote the entire text in a large and clear hand. Next, he rolled the upper part of the papyrus, including the gap between its two sections. Pieces of string were passed through holes at the bottom of the upper part, and bullae were attached to each string and then sealed. The lower part of the document was folded over, rolled and flattened at the back and was not sealed, so that this part of the document could be accessible without breaking the sealings of the upper part. During the Roman period (Vandorpe 1996: 239–40) bullae were accompanied or completely replaced by hand signatures on the back of the document, near the holes between the two parts of the papyrus. In this manner, after folding the lower part of the papyrus, these signatures remained visible (similar deeds belonging to the archive of Babata were found by Yadin [1971: 229–31] in the Judean Desert). This short account of sealing practices of legal documents demonstrates that in the ancient world seals stood for the identity, the authority, and the responsibility of a specific individual. Despite their small size, ancient seals and seal impressions played a crucial social function. In fact, their importance can be regarded as inversely related to their size. The concentration of so much meaning in such tiny lumps of clay is in fact what gave these bullae their great significance and symbolic power.

The bullae uncovered in clear stratigraphic context of controlled excavations are among the most important discoveries made in Iron Age strata in Israel. While our results suggest two possible interpretations for the content of the documents sealed by Judahite bullae, either local correspondence or legal documents, according to the available data and parallels from the ancient Near East, we believe that these bullae were attached to legal and administrative papyri. This identification provides an insight into Judahite bureaucracy of the 7th and early 6th centuries B.C.E. The Judahite bullae were used by private individuals or public officials, probably as a way to ensure the validity of various legal documents, such as land sales, loans, wills, marriage contracts and slave sales, all of which are now lost.

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Excavations at Tel Malḥata: An Interim Report

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Introduction

Tel Malḥata is located in the eastern sector of the Beer Sheba Valley, on the eastern bank of Wadi Malḥata near its junction with Naḥal Beer Sheba (map ref. 1520/0690; Fig. 1). The mound is situated on a flat, natural terrace which rises only a few meters above the banks of the wadi (Fig. 2).

At the northeastern foot of the mound are copious wells, one of the few water sources in the entire region. For this reason, large populations of Bedouin have concentrated here until recent times, grazing sheep, working the land around the tell, and burying their dead on the tell itself and on the foot of the southwestern slopes. It appears that the inhabitants of Tel Malḥata placed much more importance on the proximity to the water source than the strategic advantage of establishing a city on one of the hills which encircle the valley.

The Arabic name of the site, Tell el-Milkh ("hill of salt"), is apparently indicative of its association with the production of salt from the Dead Sea. Salt was probably brought to the settlement that was located here, and from here distributed by camel caravans to various destinations such as Egypt and the port of Gaza. This was the case also in recent generations, as related by Bedouin elders.

Tel Malḥata is elliptical in shape, measuring 210 m long × 75 m wide and thus covering some 18 dunams. Near the mound, on the northern bank of the wadi, a smaller tell is located on a low flat ridge; this is "Small Tel Malḥata," which was occupied mainly in the Chalcolithic period and Early Bronze Age I–II. Two short excavation seasons were conducted at this site in 1980 by Ruth Amiran (Amiran and Ilan 1993). Remains of large Roman and Byzantine settlements are scattered over an extensive area to the south and west of the tell; they were partly excavated by Gichon (1979), Eldar and Baumgarten (1993), and Fabian (unpublished).

Identification of the Site

The identity of Tel Malḥata during the biblical period is a topic of dispute among scholars. Robinson (1841: 201), Guérin (1868: 125–27), Abel (1938: 391–92), and Naʾaman (2003) suggested identifying it with Moladah, one of the cities of Judah (Josh 15:6), and Simeon (Josh 19:2; 1 Chr 4:28). Crüseman (1973: 216), Garstang (1931: 82), B. Mazar (1965: 298–99), and Kallai (1967: 301) proposed identifying it with Hormah (Exod 14:45; Deut 1:44). Aharoni (1967: 289) believed that the

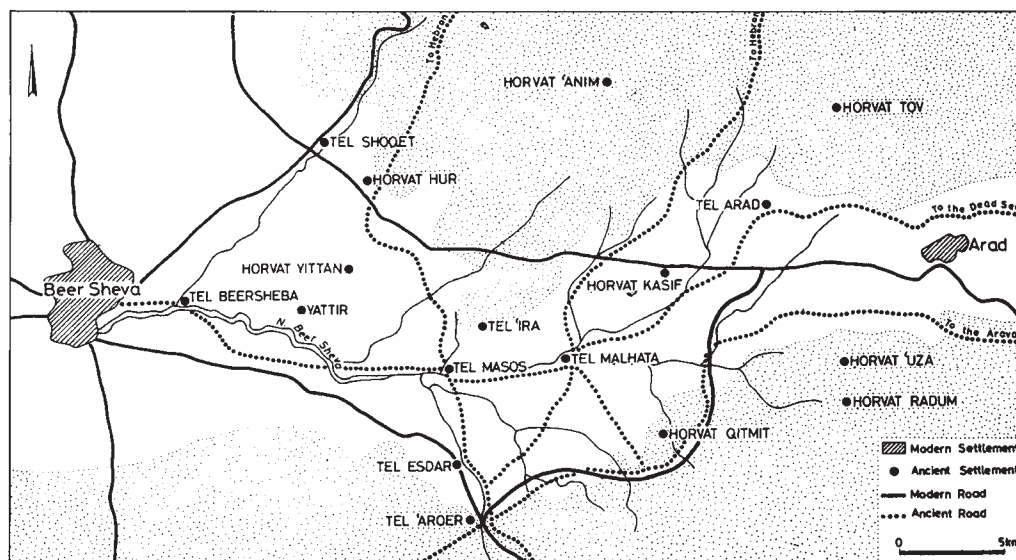


Fig. 1. Location of Tel Malhata.

site was “Arad of Yeroham,” mentioned alongside “Arad Rabat” in the list of Negev conquests of Sheshonq I. Kochavi (1993: 934) suggested it be identified with Ba’alat Be’er (Josh 19:8), or Ba’alot (Josh 15:4), due to the wells near the site.

Many researchers identify Roman-period Malhata with Malatha/Moleatha (e.g., Wooley and Lawrence 1914–15: 49; Abel 1938: 321–22; Avi-Yonah 1984: 169), which, according to the *Notitia Dignitatum*, was a fortress along the limes. It was, apparently, a central fortress from which fortification lines extended northward towards Carmel and Hebron, eastward towards the Dead Sea, and westward towards Beer Sheba (Gichon 1975; Shatzman 1983). It is possible that the Roman name of the site preserved the biblical name Moladah, as suggested by Robinson and others.

The Excavation

Nine seasons of excavations have been conducted at the site thus far. The first two seasons, in the years 1967 and 1971, were carried out by an expedition, directed by Kochavi (1993). In these seasons, two trenches were excavated: Trench W on the northern slope of the high terrace and Section Z on the southern slope of the lower terrace.

Excavations at the site were renewed in 1990 by a joint expedition of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University and Baylor University of Texas.¹ This

1. The first two seasons were headed by M. Kochavi with the assistance of E. Yadin, Z. Gal, and T. Fenton. The other seven seasons were headed by I. Beit-Arieh and B. C. Cresson, with the assistance of J. Albright, J. Walser, P. Splitstone, A. Hassel, and L. Tatum. Registration: M. Teler, E. Brand, A. Siman-Tov. Surveying: P. Kaminski. Photographers: N. Adani, P. Shargo. Restoration: R. Pelta, Y. Veener. Pottery drawings: Y. Kapelyan, A. Pery. Plan drawings: J. Dekel, O. Paran, Y. Smertenko. Coin identification: A. Kindler, O. Tal.



Fig. 2. Aerial view of Tel Malḥata.

expedition conducted seven excavation seasons at the site, in 1990, 1992–1995, 1998, and 2000, in which about 1000 sq m were excavated.

The many Bedouin graves found on the high terrace of the tell comprised a significant hindrance to the planning of the excavation. Consequently, excavations were concentrated mainly on limited areas (Areas A, D, E, F, G, H) where no graves were discerned (Fig. 3).

This paper presents interim results of seven seasons of excavations, mainly of the second expedition. Table 1 provides a preliminary summary of the stratigraphy of Tel Malḥata.

Table 1. Stratigraphy of Tel Malḥata

Stratum	Period	Date
I	Roman II	4th–3rd centuries B.C.E.
II	Hellenistic	3rd–2nd centuries B.C.E.
III	Iron Age IIc (2–3 phases)	7th–beginning of 6th century B.C.E.
IV	Iron Age IIb (2 phases)	8th century B.C.E.
V	Iron Age IIa	end of 10th–9th century B.C.E.
VI	MB IIb–c	18th–16th centuries B.C.E.

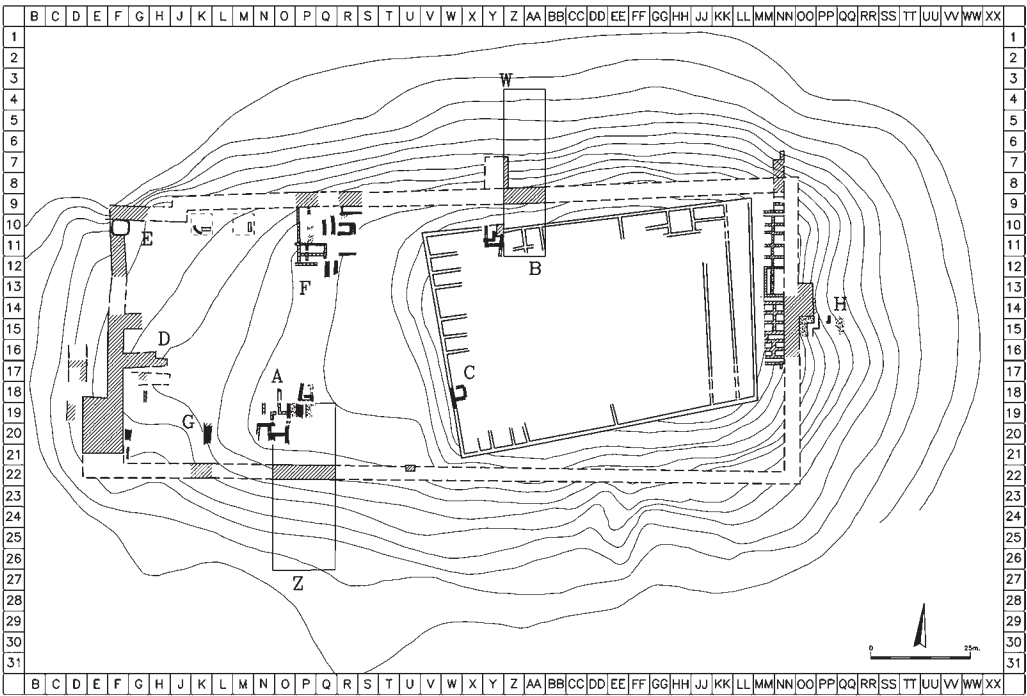


Fig. 3. Excavated areas (A, D, E, F, G, H) of Tel Malḥata.

The Remains

Stratum VI: The Middle Bronze Age IIb

The earliest activity at Tel Malḥata dates to the Middle Bronze II (the 18th century B.C.E.). Remains of this settlement were uncovered in only one area, at the bottom of Section W (Kochavi 1993), and therefore our knowledge of this stratum is limited. We can assume that in this period the settlement covered an area of not more than 10 dunams.

Another settlement from this period was discovered at nearby Tel Masos, some 7.5 km to the west of Tel Malḥata (Fritz and Kempinski 1983). The locations of Tel Malḥata and Tel Masos on the banks of Wadi Malḥata and Naḥal Beer Sheba, close to their wells, seem to indicate that they were situated on the route that connected the southern Hebron Mountains with the southern coastal plain of Israel.

Strata V–III: The Iron Age

Stratum V

During the Iron Age II, after a gap of 600 years, settlement was renewed at the site and existed continuously until its destruction at the end of the Iron Age. Based on the ceramic finds, the beginning of the settlement (Stratum V) should be attributed to the end of the 10th and the 9th centuries B.C.E. Only limited areas of Stra-



Fig. 4. A high rampart built above city wall of Stratum V, uncovered in city wall of Stratum V.

tum V were exposed. A high rampart built from riverbed gravel coated with stones built against a ca. 4.5-m-thick mudbrick city wall had been erected in this stratum. Segments of it were uncovered in Areas F, D, H, and Section Z (Fig. 4).

In Area A, a large three-room pillared building was uncovered. This typical Iron Age storage house survived throughout all Iron Age strata. The city of Stratum V was destroyed by fire.

Stratum IV

After the destruction of Stratum V, there was a gap in the settlement of the site. At the beginning of the 8th century B.C.E. (Stratum IV) the city was completely renovated. A new 3.5-m-wide mudbrick city wall was erected, plastered on both sides. Protruding mudbrick towers were integrated into the wall. This fortification system continued to exist in Stratum III. One of the towers (in Section W) was preserved to a height of 7 m (20 brick courses). Two additional towers were uncovered in Area H. In this stratum, a stone coated glacis was built against the city wall. Sections of it were exposed in Area H, at the edge of the eastern slope of the tell and in Section Z. In Area F, located at the northern edge of the lower terrace, a complex of buildings and courtyards from this stratum was exposed, partly built against the city wall. They were built mostly of mudbrick. In this location, the city wall was preserved to a height of 3.25 m. It became clear that this wall was partly erected upon the wide mudbrick wall of Stratum V (Fig. 4). Stratum IV was destroyed at the end of the 8th century, possibly in the course of the Sennacherib campaign in 701 B.C.E.

A different type of fortification system was uncovered along the western edges of the lower terrace of the mound. In this area (Area D), segments of a wall were exposed along ca. 50 m, as well as a corner tower. In the southern part of this area, a kind of inner fortress was uncovered. The remains of this building are comprised of the above-mentioned corner tower and two mudbrick walls, 3.5 m wide, which were built perpendicular to the wall and extended into the city. One of the perpendicular walls was preserved for its entire length of ca. 10 m. As of yet, we have



Fig. 6:1. Iron IIc pottery of Stratum III.

the rooms. This was the final destruction of the town; it was never again resettled as an urban site. The date of the phases of Stratum III falls between the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century B.C.E., that is, during the reign of King Manasseh (e.g., Finkelstein and Na'aman 2004: 71) and probably King Josiah.

Stratum II: The Hellenistic Period

After the destruction of the Iron Age city at the beginning of the 6th century B.C.E., the site lay deserted for some 300 years until the Hellenistic period, during which a settlement was founded on the higher terrace of the tell (Stratum II). Only in two areas (B and C) were the meager remains of this settlement uncovered, and on the surface of the tell very few Hellenistic pottery sherds were found, evidence that the settlement was short-lived.

Stratum I: The Late Roman Period

During the 3rd century CE, a large fortress, ca. 70 m long × 50 m wide, was built on the tell (Stratum I; see Fig. 3). It is possible that it served as a military camp. It was surrounded by a 1.25-m-wide stone wall, preserved in Area C to a height of ca. 3 m. A row of rooms against the wall is visible on the surface; others were exposed in Areas B and C. Some segments of buildings and installations were uncovered in the lower terrace (Area G). Three phases have been identified in the buildings. Coins which were found in the rooms and on the surface are from the rules of Galienus Ceasar, Clandius Gothicus, and Diocletian (last third of the 3rd century C.E.)

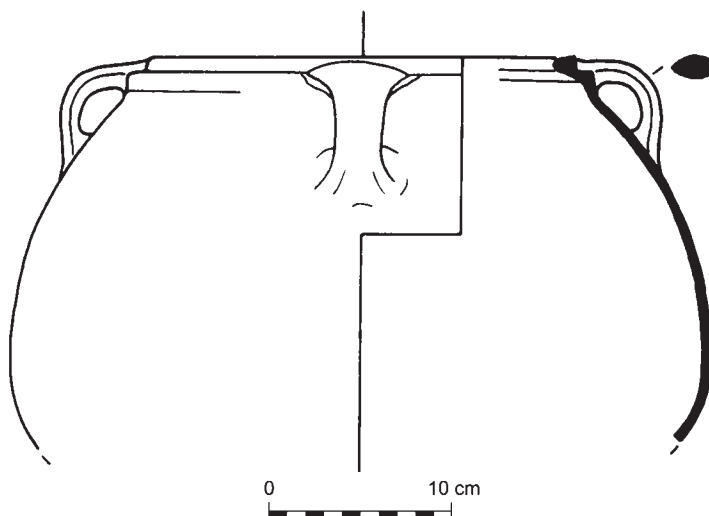


Fig. 6:2. An Edomite cooking pot with four handles.



Fig. 6:3. A deep bowl, light-cream colored, with three bone-shaped legs.

and of Constantine (308–337) and Theodosius I (378–395). According to Roman sources, the Cohors I Flavia battalion encamped in Malḥata (Moleatha; Avi-Yonah 1984: 169).

The Finds

Pottery

The pottery of Strata IV and III includes a group of vessels that were in use in Judah and common in the Negev sites during the Iron IIb–c, alongside Edomite vessels well dated to the 7th and early 6th centuries B.C.E. (Fig. 6:1).

Particularly outstanding is the group of cooking pots characterized by a wide mouth, no neck, and a stepped rim. The ware, containing a large percentage of



Fig. 6:4. A pilgrim flask with a swollen body and two handles.

Nubian sandstone, has the same components as the predominant ware of cooking pots from Edom in Transjordan. It appears that this Nubian sandstone originated in the area of Petra. Among the cooking pots, one subtype in particular with four handles must be mentioned—a type unknown in the Beer Sheba Valley but which appears at Buseirah in Edom (Fig. 6:2). This subtype of cooking pot, termed by us the “Edomite cooking pot,” comprised ca. 85% of the cooking pot types at Tel Malḥata, while only 15% of the pots are common Judahite types, including pots with necks and ridges and those with no neck and a flat rim. A similar quantitative relationship of cooking pots is found at the nearby Edomite shrine at Ḥorvat Qitmit, while at other sites in the northern Negev beside ‘Aroer the percentage of the Edomite



Fig. 6:5. An Edomite krater with denticulated decoration.

cooking pots in the cooking pot assemblage is very small. In this respect, Tel Malḥata is differentiated from the other sites of this period in the Judahite Negev.

Among the few unique complete vessels at Tel Malḥata, for which parallels are found only in 7th-century B.C.E. Edom, a few must be mentioned:

(1) A deep bowl of light cream color with thin walls. The flat base has three legs in the shape of astragali bones (Fig. 6:3). The only similar bowls (decorated with colored lines) were uncovered at Buseirah in Edom (Oakshott 1978: Pl. 17:1).

(2) A pilgrim flask with a swollen body and two handles, which are attached at the shoulder and do not reach the neck (Fig. 6:4). The only similar flask found thus far was also found at Buseirah (Oakshott 1978: Pl. 34:1).

(3) A unique krater with denticulated decoration (Fig. 6:5).

(4) A painted Edomite style jar (Fig. 6:6).

In addition, in Stratum III, a relatively large number of sherds of Edomite vessels were found, among them bowls painted with geometric designs and bowls and chalices decorated in a denticulated pattern.

Special Small Finds

Among the special finds of Strata IV and III, a small number of stamp seals should be mentioned. One of them is incorporated into a bronze ring (Fig. 7).

Fig. 6:6 (left). A painted Edomite-style jar.



Fig. 7 (below). A stamp seal on a bronze ring.



Also found were marked weights of 1, 2, 4, and 8 shekels. In addition, a unique large-scale 1,450-gram weight, valued at 128 shekels, was found (Kletter and Beit-Arieh 2001; see current Fig. 8). Other finds include household cult objects such as stands with windows carved in them, incense altars, a kernos bearing animal figures, cosmetic pallets, Egyptian scarabs, fragments of wooden furniture, and many bone inlay pieces.

Figurines

In Strata IV and III, dozens of clay figurines were uncovered. A few of the human figurines are pillar figurines, which were common in this period; others are of rarer types. Two human figurines from Area D command special interest: From one only, the hollow head of a male with a long beard has survived, bearing traces of red and black paint (Fig. 9). The other figurine is almost complete and depicts a bearded male playing a double flute (Fig. 10). His facial features are striking: a large nose, outlined, protruding eyes, and thick lips. The facial features are attached to a hollow cylinder, the upper part of which is modeled in the shape of a hat. The



Fig. 8. A large-scale, 1,450-gram weight, valued at 128 shekels (right).

resemblance, both in shape and technology, between these figurines and the goddess figurine from Ḥorvat Qitmit is noteworthy (Fig. 11). It seems that they were both made in the same workshop, possibly even by the same craftsman, and it is feasible that this workshop was located at Tel Malḥata.

Inscriptions

Eight fragments of Edomite ostraca (Fig. 12) and four Hebrew inscriptions on vessels fragments (Fig. 13) were found. In addition, one Aramaic ostrakon was found. Some of the Edomite ostraca have not yet been deciphered, partly due to difficulties in identification and partly as a result of their fragmentary state.

Discussion:

Tel Malḥata in the 7th Century B.C.E.

At the present state of the excavations, only Stratum III can be summarized, that is, the last stage and the most extensive stratum of the Iron Age town. The rich finds of Stratum III are compatible with the settlement picture of the Judahite Negev in the 7th century B.C.E.; other field studies have also indicated that settlement activity in this region reached its peak in the 7th century B.C.E.

I refer to 11 sites, all of which have been excavated; from west to east, these are: Tel Beer-sheba, Tel Masos, Tel ʿIra, ʿAroer, Ḥorvat Anim, Tel Malḥata, Ḥorvat Radum, Ḥorvat ʿUza, Arad, Ḥorvat Tov, and the Edomite shrine at Ḥorvat Qitmit (Beit-Arieh 1995; 1999; 2007 and bibliography). Of all these sites, six—Tel Masos, Ḥorvat Anim, Ḥorvat ʿUza, Ḥorvat Radum, Ḥorvat Tov, and Ḥorvat Qitmit—were established only in the 7th century B.C.E. The other sites—Tel ʿIra, Arad, Tel Beer-sheba, Tel Malḥata, and ʿAroer—were established during earlier phases of the Iron Age II. It is important to note that in addition to these sites, another ca. 25 small sites were discovered in partial surveys of the region; they were apparently associated with the establishment of the main sites (Govrin 1991; Beit-Arieh 2003).

According to the rich finds of the well-fortified town of Malḥata and its strategic location in the eastern Negev, one can conclude that it held an important position



Fig. 9. The hollow head of a bearded male, with traces of red and black paint.



Fig. 10 (right). A bearded male playing a double flute.

as a central town of the Judahite administration in the Negev, while the Edomite finds represent some strong Edomite involvement in the Judahite territory.

Summary

The excavations at Tel Malḥata revealed the remains of two peak periods in the history of the site: the Middle Bronze Age II and the Iron Age II. In the Middle Bronze II, a fortified settlement was established at the site. At present, we are unable to determine the extent or character of the settlement, as only a very limited area has been uncovered. The site was part of the system of fortifications which defended the southern flank of the sedentary lands.

In the 10th–9th centuries B.C.E., a well-fortified town was founded at the site, the largest in the eastern Negev. It can be assumed that it served as a royal administrative Judahite center in the Negev.

The excavations have revealed that Tel Malḥata retained its central status in the royal Judahite settlement system in the Negev in the following centuries as well. In the 8th century, the city was renovated and additional buildings and a new fortification system were erected.

In the last city, which dates to the Iron IIc (the 7th century B.C.E.), a relatively large amount of Edomite pottery was uncovered, identical to the ceramic assemblage of the Edomite shrine at nearby Ḥorvat Qitmit. It should be mentioned that in this period a number of fortresses were built in the Judahite Negev, in order to strengthen the defenses of this vulnerable part of the country which was under



Fig. 11. The goddess figurine from Ḥorvat Qitmit.

threat from nomads from the south and the east. This vulnerability apparently resulted from the weakening of the regional authority. The new fortresses, which included Ḥorvat ‘Uza, Ḥorvat Radum, Ḥorvat Tov, and Ḥorvat Anim, strengthened the already existing fortress of Arad and the fortified town of Tel ‘Ira near Tel Malḥata.

It seems reasonable to me to connect the fortification of the Negev with the Edomite finds of Tel Malḥata and other sites in the Judahite Negev: pottery, ostraca from Ḥorvat ‘Uza and ‘Aroer, and the shrine at Ḥorvat Qitmit. If we include with these finds Ostracon 24 from Arad (Aharoni 1981), in which the commander of the fortress is ordered to send backup to a place called Ramat Negev “lest Edom come there” and the many hostile expressions against Edom in the Bible (Beit-Arieh 1995: 310ff.), it can be assumed that the fortification of the Judahite Negev was also meant to defend against an Edomite attack, a possibility hinted at by the ostraca from Arad. It can be assumed that at a certain stage at the end of the Judahite kingdom the Edomites ruled some areas in the Arabah and the eastern Negev, either to control the trade route to the Mediterranean ports or to take control of Judahite lands.

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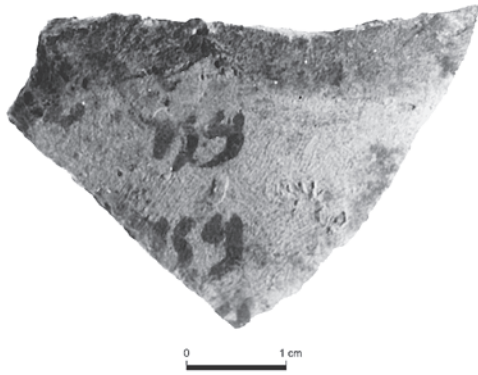


Fig. 12 (above). An Edomite ostrakon.



Fig. 13 (right). A Hebrew-inscribed vessel fragment.

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Close Yet Apart: Diverse Cultural Dynamics at Iron Age Beth-Shemesh and Lachish

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Monsieur Poirot, the famous eccentric sleuth with the curled moustache, the literary creation of Agatha Christie, always put the onus of his work on the objective analysis of the factual data. This was the starting point of his investigations in all his cases. The same principle applies to a proper approach to archaeological evaluation. The starting point of the archaeologist should be the data collected on the ground and its objective and unbiased evaluation. Had Hercule Poirot been an archaeologist, he undoubtedly would have done the same, following his rule, expounded in *Death on the Nile*, that it is always well to proceed with order and method.

This message, delivered by David Ussishkin in a recent public lecture (2003: 532), testifies that, in spite of differences in moustache style (Fig. 1), it is the figure of the investigating detective embodied in Hercule Poirot that inspires him methodologically. Indeed, an overview of David Ussishkin's rich archaeological career and especially a close look at the final report of the renewed excavations at Lachish—the apogee of his fieldwork—reveals that he was consistently faithful to the approach that sanctifies meticulous collection of facts prior to interpretation. Nowadays, when archaeologists are quick to announce in the public media new dramatic finds or revolutionary theories even if they are founded on quicksand, Ussishkin's seemingly outdated yet far more balanced and cautious alternative is certainly refreshing.

It is with much appreciation and affection to our teacher and colleague David Ussishkin that we adopt in this article his method of investigation to bring into relief conspicuous differences in the cultural dynamics of two neighboring Iron Age sites in Judah—Beth-Shemesh and Lachish (Fig. 2).¹ Our inquiry indicates that the search for general stratigraphical, typological, and historical patterns spanning whole regions may misrepresent past reality. Such an approach “averages” the idiosyncratic histories of individual sites into a supposedly harmonic picture that inevitably absorbs cultural variability and differences in sites' biographies. Broad archaeological and historical narratives should, therefore, be deconstructed into

1. Renewed excavations at Tel Beth-Shemesh were initiated and have been conducted by the authors since 1990. The project is currently conducted under the auspices of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University. The authors are indebted to Marilyn and Norman Taylor from Bethesda, MD, for their continuous support. We would also like to extend our thanks to the Goldhirsh Foundation for their important support in recent years. The research was also supported by the Israel Science Foundation (Grant Nos. 898/99 and 980/03).

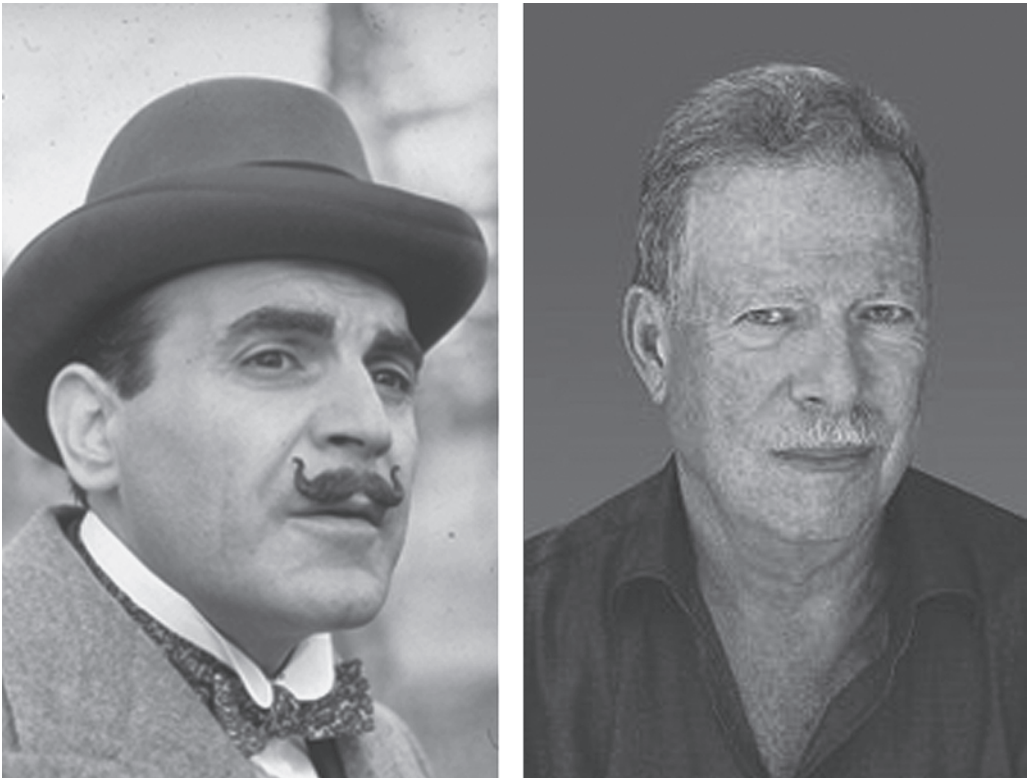


Fig. 1. David Ussishkin and Hercule Poirot: different moustaches, matching methodology.

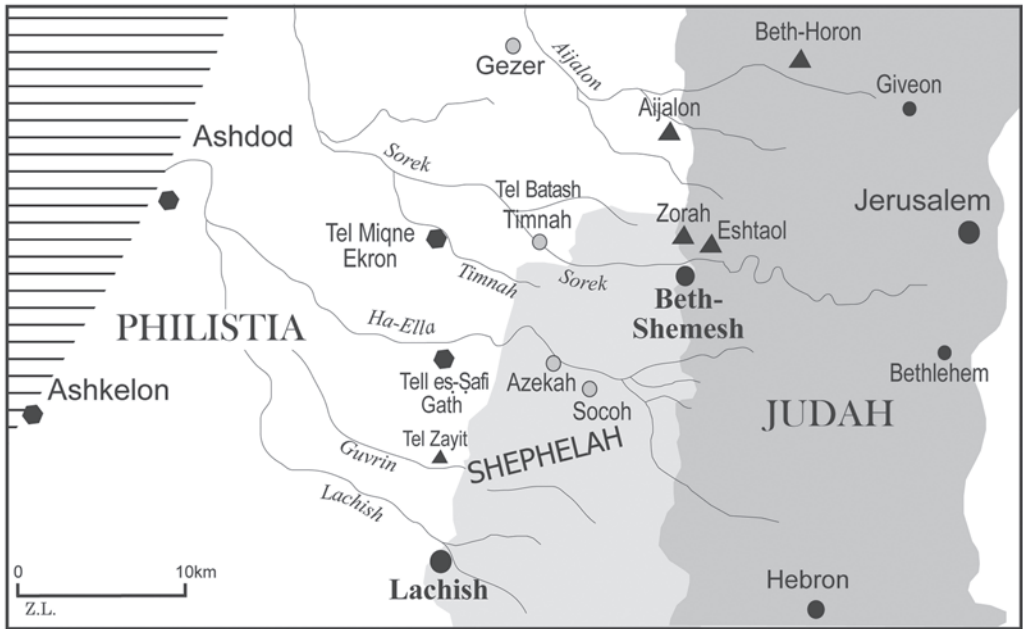


Fig. 2. The Shephelah and adjacent regions in the Iron Age.

more nuanced and focused studies. These will allow a better acquaintance (a) with the mosaics of material culture created by local behavioral patterns, (b) with the different histories of neighboring sites, and (c) with their diverse responses to the same historical events. The “Sorek Valley seesaw”—a model conceived by us for the Iron Age cultural and political changes at the border between Judah and Philistia—provides an example for insights gained by a focused analysis of a group of neighboring sites sharing the same region yet having different biographies: Tel Beth-Shemesh, Tel Batash/Timnah and Tel Miqne/Ekron (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2005; 2006; forthcoming). It is in the spirit of this analysis that we intend to examine the archaeological data from Iron Age Beth-Shemesh and Lachish. The different (hi)stories of these sites—one in the northern Shephelah and the other in its south—are rather complementary. By exposing the diverse cultural dynamics of the two sites the complex history of the Shephelah during the Iron Age is unveiled and brings us closer to the realities of those days.

*Desolation versus Prosperity:
Lachish and Beth-Shemesh in the Iron Age I*

Undoubtedly, the most intriguing phenomenon in the long history of Lachish is the lack of an Iron Age I settlement. In fact, following the destruction of the last Late Bronze Age city at the end of the 12th century B.C.E., Lachish was left desolated for over 200 years until its revival in the 9th century B.C.E. (Ussishkin 2004a: 60–78; Barkay and Ussishkin 2004: 361). In sheer contrast, our renewed excavations at Tel Beth-Shemesh revealed an uninterrupted sequence of settlements spanning both the transition from the Late Bronze to the Iron Age and the whole Iron Age I. This conspicuous difference in the settlement history of the two sites, separated by a mere 25 km, begs an explanation.

During the 13th and 12th centuries B.C.E., Lachish enjoyed a period of great prosperity under Egyptian hegemony in southern Canaan. The prosperous LB III city, differing radically from the modest LB I–II settlements at the site, reached its climax in Level VI.² An impressive pillared public building was uncovered on the western slope of the mound while a large and richly decorated temple stood at its summit (Barkay and Ussishkin 2004: 352–61; Ussishkin 2004b: 215–81). Though the latter area was severely disturbed by building operations related to the Iron Age Judahite Palace-Fort, Ussishkin (2004a: 62–63) believes that a Canaanite royal acropolis comprising a palace complex and a main temple must have crowned the center of the mound.

Strong Egyptian affinities in the architecture and contents of the Level VI temple, administrative Hieratic inscriptions, a bronze plaque bearing a cartouche of Ramesses III, and two anthropoid clay coffins hint at the existence of an Egyptian governmental center in Level VI (Ussishkin 2004a: 64–65). Singer (1988: 5) sug-

2. It should be noted that according to Ussishkin's terminology LB III spans the period ca. 1300–1130 B.C.E. (1985; 2004a: 75). Other scholars (e.g., Mazar 1990: 295–300; 2008) prefer to use the term “Iron Age IA” for the first half of the 12th century B.C.E. At the Tel Beth-Shemesh excavations, we subscribe to the latter.

gested that Lachish was annexed by Ramesses III to the Egyptian jurisdiction as part of the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Dynasties' policy to impose direct Egyptian rule over southern Canaan. He further argued that an Egyptian "Governor's Residency" existed on the acropolis of the city at the time. However, the exact nature of Egypt's rule in the regions and the specific cities which were supposedly annexed to Egypt in Late Bronze III are debated (Oren 1984; Singer 1988; Higginbotham 2000). In any event, Level VI flourished till the end of Egyptian hegemony over the country, ca. 1130 B.C.E., when it was violently destroyed. Following this severe devastation, Lachish was abandoned and remained deserted for many generations. Tufnell (Tufnell, Inge, and Harding 1940: 24; Tufnell 1953: 52) and Ussishkin (2004a: 72) have suggested that the agents of destruction were the Sea Peoples, immigrants to southern Canaan.

Destruction in the 12th century B.C.E., probably at the hands of the Sea Peoples, followed by long-term abandonment characterizes not only Lachish but also other sites in the southern and western Shephelah. Thus, recent excavations at Tel Zayit, a close neighbor of Lachish, revealed a similar historical sequence: significant Late Bronze settlement, destruction, and occupation gap throughout the Iron Age I, and renewed settlement in Iron Age IIA (Tappy et al. 2006: 22; Tappy 2008). A break in the occupation sequence between the end of the Late Bronze and Iron Age IIA seems to occur also at Tel Hesi and Tel Nagila, though the data from these sites are incomplete (see, respectively, Fargo 1993: 631–32; Amiran and Eitan 1993: 108). The information from the individual sites is replicated and enhanced by Finkelstein's analysis of Late Bronze III–Iron I settlement patterns in the southern coastal plain and the Shephelah (1996a; 2000). Of utmost importance to our discussion is the observation that the Late Bronze/Iron I transition saw the complete destruction and abandonment of the densely populated region between Lachish and Tell eš-Šāfi/Gath. In sheer contrast, the same analysis shows that settlement in the northern Shephelah, from the Sorek Brook (the Beth-Shemesh–Ekron line) to the Ayalon Valley and Gezer, continued almost unharmed. The territory of Lachish must have been taken over by Philistine Gath, probably as far south as Tel Sera' and Tel Haror (Singer 1993: 139; Finkelstein 2000: 170–71), yet neither Lachish nor its countryside was reinhabited. Since it is hard to believe that all the Canaanite population of Lachish and its densely settled hinterland were completely annihilated by the Philistines, Bunimovitz (1998: 107–8) interpreted this odd situation as the outcome of forced *syneocism*—a purposeful policy of urban nucleation adopted by the newcomers. According to this suggestion, the Canaanite rural population within the Philistine heartland as well as the inhabitants of neighboring sites such as Lachish and others was displaced from its own territory and relocated in the main Philistine centers (cf. Finkelstein 1996a: 233–36; 2000: 170–74; Ussishkin 2004a: 72).

As emphasized above, the situation in the northern Shephelah, including Beth-Shemesh, was completely different. Previous excavations at Tel Beth-Shemesh already discovered an Iron Age I settlement. In 1911–12 Duncan Mackenzie unearthed the remains of three cities of which the second one, attributed to the "Philistine Period" (Iron Age I), was found sandwiched between the "First City" of the

“Canaanite Period” (Middle-Late Bronze Age) and the “Third City” of the “Israelite Period (Iron Age II; Mackenzie 1912–13: 7–39). These finds were corroborated by the 1928–33 Haverford College excavations directed by Elihu Grant and interpreted by G. Ernst Wright. Their Stratum III was recognized as a single phase Iron I settlement (Grant and Wright 1939: 12–13, 51–66). However, our excavations revealed a more complex stratigraphical and cultural sequence of *four* Iron I levels (Levels 7–4) spanning the time between the 12th and the mid-10th centuries B.C.E.

The finds from these levels testify to an unbroken continuity of Canaanite cultural traditions at Beth-Shemesh from the Late Bronze II (our Level 8, 13th century B.C.E.) into Iron Age I (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2008a; 2008b; for a comprehensive discussion of the material culture assemblages of Levels 7–4, see Bunimovitz and Lederman forthcoming). The spacious buildings unearthed in Levels 8 and 6 are characterized by two elongated rooms—occasionally stone paved—facing two sides of a central court. Other Level 6 buildings have wooden columns on stone foundations, also representing Canaanite architectural tradition characteristic of Late Bronze–Early Iron I neighboring sites in the Shephelah (e.g., Tel Batash, Tel Harasim, and Lachish). Furthermore, “Lamp-and-Bowl” foundation deposits (see Bunimovitz and Zimhoni 1993) were found in both the Late Bronze and the Iron I levels. In accordance with the architecture, the character and composition of the pottery assemblages from Levels 7–4 show clear Canaanite affinities, in line with other lowland sites such as Tel Batash, Gezer, and Tell Qasile (Fig. 3). Cypriot and Mycenaean pottery last appear in Level 8, but in Level 7 no Monochrome Philistine pottery was found. Philistine Bichrome pottery appears for the first time in Level 6, yet it comprises only 5% of the pottery assemblage. Bronze artifacts found in Level 7 (e.g., an intact hoe) clearly represent continuation of Canaanite metalurgy in the 12th century B.C.E.

Two important insights emanate from the above comparison between Iron Age I Beth-Shemesh and Lachish:

1. Judging from the archaeological evidence from Tel Beth-Shemesh and other sites in the northern Shephelah, it seems that the common date of Philistine settlement in southern Canaan should be maintained in spite of recent attempts to lower it to the end of the 12th century B.C.E. Due to the lack of any kind of Philistine pottery (Monochrome and Bichrome) from Lachish Level VI, Ussishkin (1985: 222–23; 2004a: 72–73) suggested that the production of this locally made pottery began only after the destruction of Level VI. This suggestion was embraced by Finkelstein (1995; 1996b; 2000) and became one of the linchpins of his revised Iron Age chronology that lowers the settlement of the Philistines in Canaan and the production of their typical pottery until after the end of Egyptian presence in Canaan. The “chronocentric” approach adopted by Ussishkin and Finkelstein (Mazar 2008) negates the possibility that Philistine pottery is missing from Lachish due to cultural rather than chronological reasons (as suggested, e.g., by Mazar 1997: 158; Bunimovitz and Faust 2001 and further references therein). However, unlike Lachish, the lack of Monochrome Philistine pottery from the tight stratigraphical sequence at Beth-Shemesh cannot be explained by its supposedly late appearance

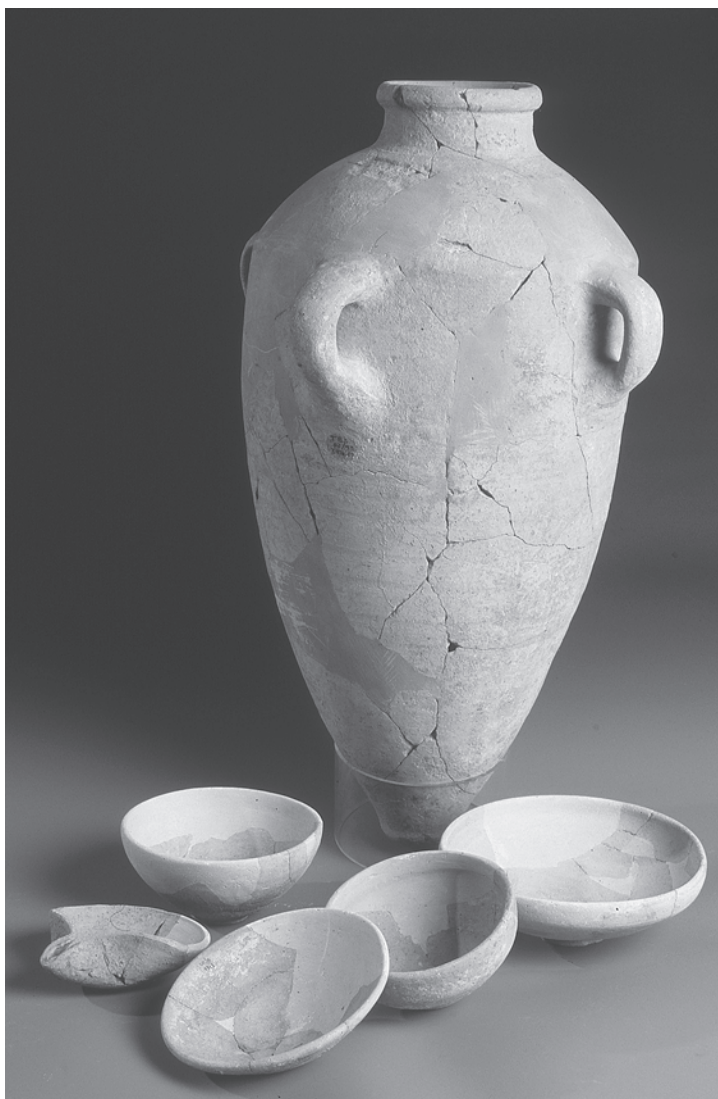


Fig. 3. Pottery vessels
from Level 6 at Tel
Beth-Shemesh.

or by an occupation gap. Here, as at other sites in the northern Shephelah where the Late Bronze/Iron I transition was not accompanied by abandonment, it is clear that Monochrome Philistine pottery, produced in the main Philistine centers, as well as other Philistine attributes, were deliberately avoided because of the cultural border rising in the 12th century B.C.E. between the emerging Philistine entity and its neighbors (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2008a; see also Faust 2006). This border line seems to have been even sharper in the southern Shephelah and the western Negev due to the fact that many sites, including Lachish, were turned into Egyptian governmental and administrative centers during the Twentieth Dynasty.

2. The conspicuous contrast between the 12th-century destruction and abandonment pattern prevailing in the southern Shephelah/western Negev and the

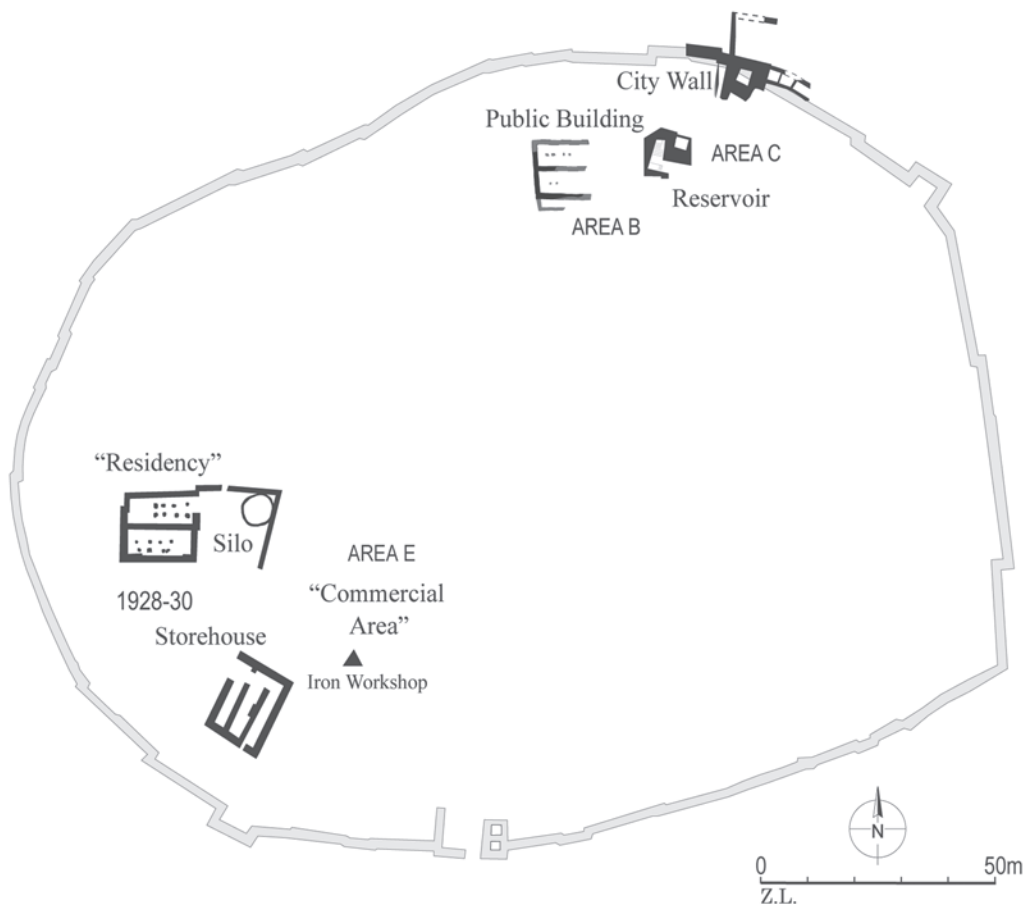


Fig. 4. Integrated map of early Iron Age II public buildings at Tel Beth-Shemesh: “Residency” and large silo (1928–30); storehouse (1930); public building (Area B); water reservoir and fortifications (Area C); “commercial area” and earlier iron-smithing workshop (Area E).

settlement continuity in the northern Shephelah concurs with the geopolitical situation in these regions at the time. Apparently, after the initial stage of Philistine settlement in southwest Canaan, they focused their military actions against Egyptian governmental sites surrounding their heartland. The differential destruction/desolation pattern discussed above supports Stager’s (1995) claim for Egyptian containment policy around the Philistine enclave and the breaking of this *cordon sanitaire* only after the Egyptian withdrawal from southern Canaan.

*Emergence of Judahite Strongholds on the Border with Philistia:
Beth-Shemesh and Lachish in the Iron Age IIA*

In the beginning of Iron Age II, Beth-Shemesh changed its face. An overall re-planning of the Iron I settlement and the appearance of a variety of public buildings left no doubt in Grant’s and Wright’s minds that the site became the administrative



Fig. 5. Stone foundations of one of the architectural components of the Iron Age fortifications at Tel Beth-Shemesh preserved to their original height.

center of Solomon's second district, as implied by 1 Kings 4 (1939: 67–70; Wright 1976: 252). Additional finds unearthed in the renewed excavations confirm the observation that in early Iron Age II—when our Level 3 (which corresponds to Strata IIa and IIb of the Haverford College expedition) was established—the village of Beth-Shemesh was transformed into a city with all the symbols of central political government (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2006; forthcoming). An integrated map, combining the new finds with the fragmented information left by our predecessors clearly reflects the major change experienced by Beth-Shemesh (Fig. 4). The map brings into relief the markers of central government that suddenly appeared at the site—fortifications (Fig. 5), an underground water reservoir, a tripartite storehouse with adjacent silo, a “commercial area” (Fig. 6), public buildings, and an iron workshop, all established directly over Level 4 buildings in the course of the life span of Level 3, mainly during its early phase (second half of the 10th and beginning of the 9th century B.C.E.).

What were the circumstances for this profound organizational change that transformed the unfenced village of Beth-Shemesh into a fortified urban center on Judah's border with Philistia? A major event, undoubtedly with important repercussions for the entire northern Shephelah, was the dramatic decline of the main Philistine city of Ekron in the mid-10th century and its disappearance from



Fig. 6. An assemblage of *Imlk*-like jars from a building comprising part of Tel Beth-Shemesh Level 3 "commercial area."

the geopolitical scene for about 200 years, until the mid-8th century B.C.E. (for various suggestions for the date of Ekron's decline and its causes, see Bunimovitz and Lederman 2006: 423 and references therein; for Ekron's revival, see Na'aman 2003a). Elsewhere, we have argued that growing Philistine pressure and competition over resources in the Sorek Valley during the Iron Age I forced Canaanite Beth-Shemesh to redefine its identity and raised a cultural boundary within the valley (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2008a). The decline of Ekron (and, for that matter, also of its daughter site, Tel Batash) in the 10th century B.C.E. must have diminished the tension between the different groups living in the valley. New opportunities were opened for intercultural contact, as well as for renewed ethnic ambiguity and boundary crossing. It was in that hour, when direct Philistine threat in the valley almost disappeared, that the young monarchy emerging in the mountain region had to keep a close eye on its periphery. Then was the time to delineate its territory, to consolidate its hold on border communities that might slip away, and to control the ethnic entity that would become a nation. Thus, the village of Beth-Shemesh was turned into a border town in the Sorek Valley with all symbols of centralized political power. The foundation of monumental buildings served both propaganda and practical functions. The image of the site was completely changed and the political loyalty of its inhabitants was assured.

Following the destruction of Level VI, Lachish remained abandoned for a long time. The renewal of occupation at the site is marked by Level V, yet only a few poor remains are presently known from this level (Ussishkin 2004a: 76–77). According to Ussishkin (2004a: 76), the new inhabitants of Lachish supported new material culture and arrived at the site as part of the process of the settlement of the Shephelah by Judahites and the crystallization of the Judahite kingdom. In fact, the hand of a central Judahite government in Lachish was first felt only in Level IV, when large-scale building works were conducted at the site. The settlement was heavily fortified by strong walls and a large gate complex. At the center of the mound, a palace-fort was erected over a massive podium whose construction demanded heavy leveling and filling operations. Undoubtedly, in Level IV Lachish was turned into a military stronghold of prime importance to the kingdom of Judah (Ussishkin 2004a: 80–82).

Based on meticulous analysis of the pottery assemblages of Levels V and IV, Zimhoni (1997: 173; 2004: 1707) concluded that the royal city of Level IV may have been founded in the mid-9th century B.C.E. This conclusion seems to concur with the suggestion that the fortress city of Level IV was founded by the Judahite king Asa (908–867 B.C.E.) or by his son Jehoshaphat (870–846 B.C.E.), both of whom, according to 2 Chr 14:5–6 and 17:2, fortified cities in Judah (Ussishkin 1982: 28; 2004a: 79). Elsewhere, the date of settlement renewal at Lachish was lowered to ca. 830 B.C.E. (Barkay and Ussishkin 2004: 361). However, with the integrity so typical of his archaeological work, Ussishkin (2004a: 79) has recently admitted that “with the absence of any written evidence all these suggestions are largely speculative.” Disappointingly, “the pottery evidence . . . the sole indicator for the construction date of the fortress city” is also inconclusive (2004a: 79). Included in the pottery horizon defined by Herzog and Singer-Avitz (2004) as “Late Iron Age IIA,” the establishment of Lachish IV can be dated to any time in the ninth century B.C.E.³

An intriguing solution to the problem may rise from a study of the geopolitical situation in the southern Shephelah during the 12th–9th centuries B.C.E. and especially the settlement history of Lachish vis-à-vis its Philistine neighbor Gath. As detailed above, the establishment in Iron Age I of a large Philistine center at Gath, which inherited Lachish’s territory, may have prevented the rehabilitation of Lachish for many years (cf. Ussishkin 2004a: 76). This Philistine city-state thrived during Iron Age IIA, reaching an estimated size of 50 ha (Uziel and Maeir 2005: Table 3; Maeir and Uziel 2007: 34; Table 1). However, the flourishing 10th–9th century B.C.E. settlement (Stratum A3) was completely destroyed, presumably by the Aramean king Hazael, as alluded to in 2 Kgs 12:18 (Maeir 2004). Following the tremendous devastation of the site, Gath continued to be settled during the Iron Age IIB, but on a much reduced scale (Maeir and Uziel 2007: 35). It can, therefore, be surmised that the fatal blow inflicted on mighty Gath opened the way for the expansion of Judah into the southern Shephelah and the establishment of a Judahite governmental center in Lachish early in the second half of the 9th century B.C.E. (for a similar

3. Herzog and Singer-Avitz (2004: 229) prefer, however, to date the foundation of the fortified settlement of Lachish Level IV to around 900 B.C.E.

hypothesis, see now Fantalkin and Finkelstein 2006; this date also concurs with Ussishkin's suggestion of ca. 830 B.C.E. for the rehabilitation of the desolated site, above). The return to Lachish may have begun prior to the fall of Gath, as hinted by the poor remains of the unfenced settlement of Lachish Level V (initiated by population pressure in the central mountain region and/or weakening of Gath's control over its border with Judah?). However, Judahite settlement in the region as well as governmental building operations at Lachish may have been realized only after the demise of Gath.⁴

If the above hypothetical reconstruction indeed reflects past reality in the Shephelah, it provides interesting insights about a "seesaw" of power relations that may have existed between Lachish and Gath similar to the "Sorek seesaw" that characterized the relationship between Beth-Shemesh and Ekron. Yet, the two "seesaws" differ in one important aspect. While the early withdrawal of Ekron from the geopolitical scene enabled the establishment of a Judahite governmental center at Beth-Shemesh already in the second half of the 10th century B.C.E., in the southern Shephelah almost a century had to go by until the destruction of Gath allowed the Judahite kingdom to establish a bigger fortified center at Lachish.

Did Amos's Earthquake Destroy Lachish IV and Beth-Shemesh Level 3?

The Judahite stronghold of Lachish IV came to a sudden end. Ussishkin (2004a: 83; see also Zimhoni 1997: 172–73; Barkay and Ussishkin 2004: 447) proposed that the destruction was caused by the earthquake which occurred in the days of King Uzziah, in ca. 760 B.C.E. (Amos 1:1; Zech 14:5; Austin, Franz, and Frost 2000). His assumption rests on a number of observations: no remains of destruction by fire were found either in the monumental or in the domestic buildings; large assemblages of complete pottery vessels, usually a sign of sudden, unforeseen destruction were uncovered *in situ* (mainly in Area S);⁵ the rebuilding of the site in Level III was conducted along the same line as the original structures; and full continuation in function between Level IV and III buildings and material culture is evident (Ussishkin 2004a: 83).

The flourishing settlement of Level 3 at Tel Beth-Shemesh also came to a sudden end. Yet, unlike Lachish IV, the termination of the Judahite governmental center at Beth-Shemesh (corresponding to the violent termination of Grant and Wright's

4. In light of the above hypothesis, we find it difficult to see how Judah was able to resettle the deserted site of Tel Zayit already in the "early-to-mid-10th century" prior to its return to Lachish (Tappy 2008: 6; see also Tappy et al. 2006: 22–23). The location of Tel Zayit—outside the Shephelah on the eastern boundary of the coastal plain and only 8 km south of Gath—may suggest that: (a) vSettlement at Tel Zayit was initiated by Philistine Gath rather than Judah, which at that time could not yet even settle Lachish due to the geopolitical balance; (b) Tel Zayit was settled by Judah at a later time than claimed by its excavator; (c) Judah took advantage of a decline in Gath's power *prior* to its destruction by Hazael (uncharted yet by the excavations at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi) to expand west, beyond Lachish. The first two options are treated now by Finkelstein, Sass, and Singer-Avitz 2008.

5. This observation (see also Barkay and Ussishkin 2004: 445) is puzzling since it contradicts Zimhoni's (1997: 69 and 2004: 1652) emphatic claim: "in the two levels (Levels V and IV) . . . there were hardly any complete vessels, despite considerable efforts on the restoration table."

Stratum IIb [1939: 14]) was accompanied by a tremendous conflagration that consumed especially public buildings. Some of the buildings were presumably evacuated of all their content or looted before they were set on fire (e.g., the “Pillared Building” in Area B) while others (in the “Commercial Area” of Area E) were found choked with fallen mudbricks fired by the heavy conflagration as well as with pottery vessels smashed and scattered (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2000; 2003a; 2008b). Is it possible that Amos’s earthquake was the agent of the thorough destruction of Level 3 at Beth-Shemesh?

The popularity of this alleged earthquake increased lately among scholars seeking a historical datum line for the transition from Iron Age IIA to Iron Age IIB in Judah. Thus, in addition to the changeover from Lachish IV to III, Herzog and Singer-Avitz (2004: 230) have now suggested that rebuilding projects carried out at Tel Beersheba (from Stratum IV to III) and Arad (from Stratum XI to X) are the result of a nonmilitary disaster, like an earthquake. Further contenders for earthquake destructions in the south include Gezer (Dever 1992), Tel Goded (Tell ej-Judeideh, Gibson 1994: 230) and ‘En Haseva (Cohen and Yisrael 1995: 231).

The idea of a fierce earthquake destroying major sites in Judah and marking changes in the Iron Age material culture seems to be a factoid constructed by current archaeological research rather than past reality.⁶ The criteria for seismic damage conceived by geophysicists (Nur and Cline 2000: Fig. 9 and bibliography there; Marco et al. 2006) makes it clear that in neither of the above-mentioned sites are there any unequivocal traces of earthquake. Moreover, Level 3 at Beth-Shemesh features obvious signs of human-made destruction. Public buildings were set on fire; the wall foundations of the buildings around the “commercial area” are not tilted or cracked, and the spacious plaster floor which is the highlight of this area is flat as a dancing floor; last but not least, all pottery vessels stored on the floor were completely smashed and deliberately scattered over a large area before fire completely devastated the whole quarter.

Other scholars have also negated the idea of an Iron Age II earthquake in the Shephelah and the Beersheba Valley (Faust 2005: 106–7; Fantalkin and Finkelstein 2006: 22–24). The latter suggested that the earthquake in the days of Uzziah affected mainly the Kingdom of Israel and, in any event, has no relevance to material culture changes in Judah between the Iron Age IIA and Iron Age IIB.

Cutting the Gordian Knott between the destruction of Level 3 at Beth-Shemesh and Amos’s earthquake, other agents for this destruction can be suggested. Grant and Wright (1939: 14) already enumerated a wide range of candidates: the campaigns of the Assyrian kings Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon II, and Sennacherib; the clash between Jehoash and Amaziah (2 Kgs 14:11–13); and the Philistine attack in the Shephelah in the time of Ahaz (2 Chr 28:18). Yet they were unable to fix the

6. According to Maier (1985a; 1985b), “Factoids are mere hypotheses or speculations which have not been proved (and often cannot be proved), but which by constant repetition attained the apparent rank of established fact.” In the present case, it seems that geologists (e.g., Austin, Franz, and Frost 2000) are building their theories about Amos’s earthquake on repeated, yet debated, claims by archaeologists who for their part are relying on the geologists’ theories that were founded on the archaeologists’ claims.

date of the destruction more accurately than late 9th–8th century B.C.E. Today, the pottery assemblages from the destruction horizon of Level 3 (= Stratum IIB) can be dated more accurately. This is not the place for a lengthy typological discussion, and suffice it to say that the assemblage reflects typological-chronological affinities that concur with the transition between Lachish Levels IV and III and the early days of Level III (for full discussion see Bunimovitz and Lederman forthcoming). Furthermore, it is somewhat later than the destruction assemblage from Stratum A3 (= Temporary Stratum 4) at Gath presumably besieged and annihilated by Hazael king of Aram-Damascus in the late 9th century B.C.E. It should be emphasized that the Assyrian campaigns that took place late in the 8th century B.C.E. do not concur with the pottery chronology of Level 3 at Beth-Shemesh, and the narrative in 2 Chronicles 28 about a Philistine attack on the Shephelah in the days of Ahaz was reconsidered by modern scholarship as an ideological fiction (Na'aman 2003b). From an archaeological point of view, we would, therefore, date the destruction of Level 3 to the early 8th century B.C.E. It is certainly not a coincidence that concerning this very time, Beth-Shemesh is reported in the biblical sources to have been the scene of a fierce battle where Jehoash king of Israel defeated and captured Amaziah king of Judah. Most probably, this battle, ca. 790 B.C.E., ended with the destruction of Level 3 at Beth-Shemesh.⁷

One important implication of the above conclusion is that the transition from Iron Age IIA to Iron Age IIB in Judah took place around 800 B.C.E., earlier by half a century than suggested by the adherents of Amos's earthquake as the cause for the transition (e.g., Herzog 2002: 96–98; Singer-Avitz 2002: 162; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004: 229–31). In this case, and regardless of the hypothetical scenario which relates the building of Lachish Level IV to the decline of Gath, Level III at Lachish should be considered to represent a long-living settlement, which lasted almost a century, since its typical pottery assemblage seems to appear already at Beth-Shemesh in the early 8th century B.C.E. (for a growing consensus concerning this issue, see Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001: 274–75; Faust 2005: 107, n. 13; Fantalkin and Finkelstein 2006: 22–24).⁸

7. Only two short-lived samples (olive pits) from the destruction layer of Level 3 were ¹⁴C dated as part of the Iron Age radiocarbon dating project in Israel (Boaretto, Sharon, and Gilboa forthcoming; Sharon et al. 2007, samples 3937–38). The two samples, which provide a broad absolute date of 770–400 B.C.E. (due to the nature of the calibration curve), pose a problem of reliability. First, the two olive pits did not comprise a cluster but came from different contexts—a sampling problem with grave implications for radiocarbon dating recently highlighted by E. Boaretto, A. Gilboa, and I. Sharon (lecture at the Thirty Fifth Archaeological Conference in Israel, 2nd April 2009). Second, right over the destruction layer of Level 3 in Area E (from which the two samples originate) a couple of olive oil extraction installations were built in Level 2 (see below), spreading a large number of olive pits all over the area around them. This might have been the source for olive pit intrusion into the underlying layer. In any case, seven analyses were made on the two olive pits with consistent results: uncalibrated date of 2505 ± 30. If we run these results on the 95% range rather than the common 68%, the resulting date range will be 786–522 B.C.E. So, the earliest possible date for the end of Level 3 is not far from our claim of ca. 790.

8. Recently, however, Finkelstein reverted to the idea that “the appearance of the Lachish III pottery assemblage must be dated around the mid-eighth century B.C.E.” (Finkelstein and Piaseckzy 2009: 270). Amazingly enough, this completely intuitive assumption appears in an essay devoted

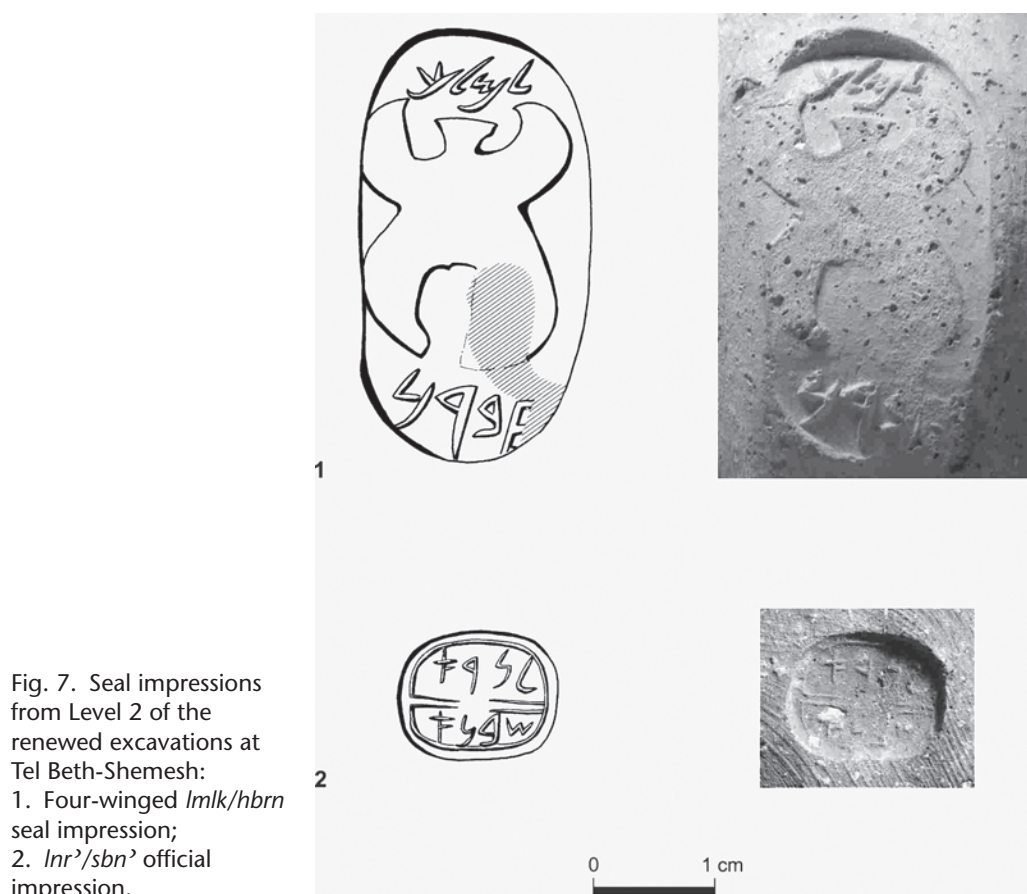


Fig. 7. Seal impressions from Level 2 of the renewed excavations at Tel Beth-Shemesh:
 1. Four-winged *lmlk*/*hbrn* seal impression;
 2. *lnr*'/*sbn*' official impression.

Parting Ways: Olive Oil Producers and Royal Administrators

Following the destruction of Level 3 Beth-Shemesh changed its face once more. Over the ruins of the Iron Age IIA governmental center, a large and unfortified settlement—Level 2 (= Grant's Stratum IIc) was erected, characterized both by thriving olive oil industry and numerous *lmlk* stamped jars (Fig. 7).⁹ At least 18 oil presses of the lever-and-weights type were found at Tel Beth-Shemesh by the three expeditions excavating at the site (Mackenzie 1912–13: 99–100; Momigliano 1996: 164–67; data published by the Haverford College expedition was collected by Gitin 1997: 84, n. 5; four installations were found in our excavations). In addition, numerous simple oil production installations comprising a stone slab (for crushing) and a small collecting vat or a stone basin were found all over the site (Grant and Wright 1939: 75–76, identified as wineries). A similar picture of intensive olive oil

to radiocarbon-dated Iron Age destruction layers in Israel, and was conceived just to “save” the low, yet problematic, ¹⁴C dates for the destruction of Level 3 at Beth-Shemesh (see n. 7 above).

9. A total of 62 *lmlk* and 13 “official” seal impressions were discovered at Tel Beth-Shemesh by the three expeditions; many of them have parallels in the large collection from Tel Lachish.

processing is known from other Judahite towns such as Tell Beit Mirsim Stratum A. Albright (1943: 56) estimated that the total number of installations at this site could have reached 30 (see also Finkelstein and Na'aman 2004: 74).

Intriguingly, oil production installations are missing from the restored Judahite stronghold of Level III at Lachish. The new city was rebuilt according to the previous outline of Level IV. Both the Lachish reliefs from Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh and the archaeological data show that the city was heavily fortified by the system of massive walls already built in Level IV and that the former city-gate was renovated and further augmented. At the summit of the mound stood the impressive palace-fort complex which was rebuilt on a larger scale. Presumably, it was the seat of a Judahite high authority—a royal governor or a military commander of the city and probably also of the surrounding Shephelah (Ussishkin 2004a: 83–87). Undoubtedly, Level III in Lachish represents the apogee of this Judahite governmental and administrative center. As such, it can be assumed that the majority of the city's population was associated with the function and maintenance of the fortress city and the garrison (Ussishkin 2004a: 84). This may explain the relegation of the Judahite olive oil industry in the Shephelah to smaller towns such as Beth-Shemesh and Tell Beit Mirsim.

Finkelstein and Na'aman (2004: 74) interpreted the late 8th century B.C.E. specialized olive-oil production of the Judahite Shephelah as state organized and incorporated within the Assyrian regional economic system at the time. In this respect, the differences between the Judahite industry and the Philistine olive oil production that substituted it in the wake of Sennacherib's 701 B.C.E. campaign are telling (for the oil industry of Ekron, see Gitin 1995; 1997). First, as we have seen, no oil presses were found at Lachish, the royal administrative center of Judah in the Shephelah, in contrast with the hundreds of presses exposed at Ekron. Second, the spatial distribution of oil installations at Tel Beth-Shemesh and Tell Beit Mirsim indicates that, unlike at Ekron, they did not constitute a separate industrial zone but were established within residential quarters. The Judahite oil industry at the end of the 8th century B.C.E. seems, therefore, to have been incorporated within the social framework of the peasant communities in the Shephelah. In line with the archaeological evidence, it is reasonable to assume that households in the Judahite rural settlements in this region were encouraged to join the organized olive oil production initiated by the state. Based on semi-specialized cottage industry, the Judahite olive oil production could have never reached the scope of the highly specialized, tremendous Philistine oil industry that flourished at Ekron during the 7th century B.C.E. (cf. Gitin 1997: 84; Fig. 4). This conspicuous difference in organization and scale between the two industries lends support to the idea that the Philistine oil production reflects Assyrian imperial initiative and support while the Judahite industry was more of a strict Judahite affair.¹⁰

10. The claim that the Shephelah is not a natural olive-orchard habitat (Finkelstein and Na'aman 2004: 74) seems to founder on the archaeobotanical evidence from Lachish and from Tel Beth-Shemesh (Liphschitz 2004; forthcoming) which includes plenty of olive wood remains from the Middle Bronze on. Olive oil installations appear at Beth-Shemesh at least from the 12th century on.

*Epilogue:
Destruction, Abandonment, and Partial Revival*

Sennacherib's campaign to Judah in 701 inflicted a fatal blow over the entire array of Judahite settlements in the Shephelah, and many were destroyed and abandoned (Dagan 2004: 2681–82). Lachish is the most celebrated example due to the unique association of biblical sources—Sennacherib's inscriptions, the Lachish reliefs in his palace, and archaeology (Ussishkin 1982). Following the destruction of Level III and the deportation of its inhabitants so vividly depicted on the Assyrian reliefs, the site was abandoned for a long period of time (Ussishkin 2004a: 90). Like Lachish and many other settlements, Beth-Shemesh Level 2 was also destroyed in 701 B.C.E. and deserted for many years. Yet our discovery and excavation of an impressive underground water reservoir (Fig. 8) revealed a previously unknown chapter in the history of Beth-Shemesh which sheds new light on the fate of the Shephelah in the aftermath of Sennacherib's campaign (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2003b). According to our interpretation of the finds, a few Judahite families tried to return to Beth-Shemesh sometime in the mid-7th century B.C.E. and reactivated the water reservoir. Interestingly, the same phenomenon of small-scale activity with no proper settlement was identified also at Lachish in the intervening period between Levels III and II (Ussishkin 2004a: 90–91). In any event, since according to Sennacherib's annals parts of the Shephelah were detached from Judah and given to the Philistine city-states, the modest trial to resettle Beth-Shemesh was soon suppressed with an iron fist. Presumably, the Philistine neighbors of Beth-Shemesh—Ekron and its daughter settlement, Tel Batash—now incorporating the olive groves and grain fields of Beth-Shemesh into their thriving olive oil industry, deliberately sealed the water reservoir, the site's source of life. Beth-Shemesh was finally deserted and never recovered by the people of Judah (cf. Finkelstein and Na'aman 2004: 75, corroborating this scenario; for a different opinion, see Fantalkin 2004).

The events at Beth-Shemesh brought us to the conclusion that in the heyday of Assyrian-Philistine economic interests in the Shephelah—focused mainly on olive-oil production—Judah was unable to return to the Shephelah. This goal would be achieved only after the final collapse of Assyrian rule in the country, in the last third of the 7th century B.C.E. Notably, however, the scope of settlement was but a pale reflection of the zenith reached before Sennacherib's campaign (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2003b: 23). Contrary to the contention that Judah's restoration of its settlement in the Shephelah began already in the first half of the 7th century B.C.E., in the days of Manasseh (Finkelstein and Na'aman 2004: 71–73), Ussishkin (2004a: 91) rather subscribes to our opinion. In his view, the partial reconstruction of the Judahite fortified settlement at Lachish—Level II, which was poorer and weaker than its Level III predecessor—was founded by King Josiah, whose reign marks a period of revival in Judah.

Only 25 km apart, one may surmise that Beth-Shemesh and Lachish shared the same cultural history. However, a meticulous analysis of the archaeological data from the two sites, in the spirit of David (Ussishkin) Poirot, reveals that the cultural dynamics of the two sites during the Iron Age differed considerably. The compara-

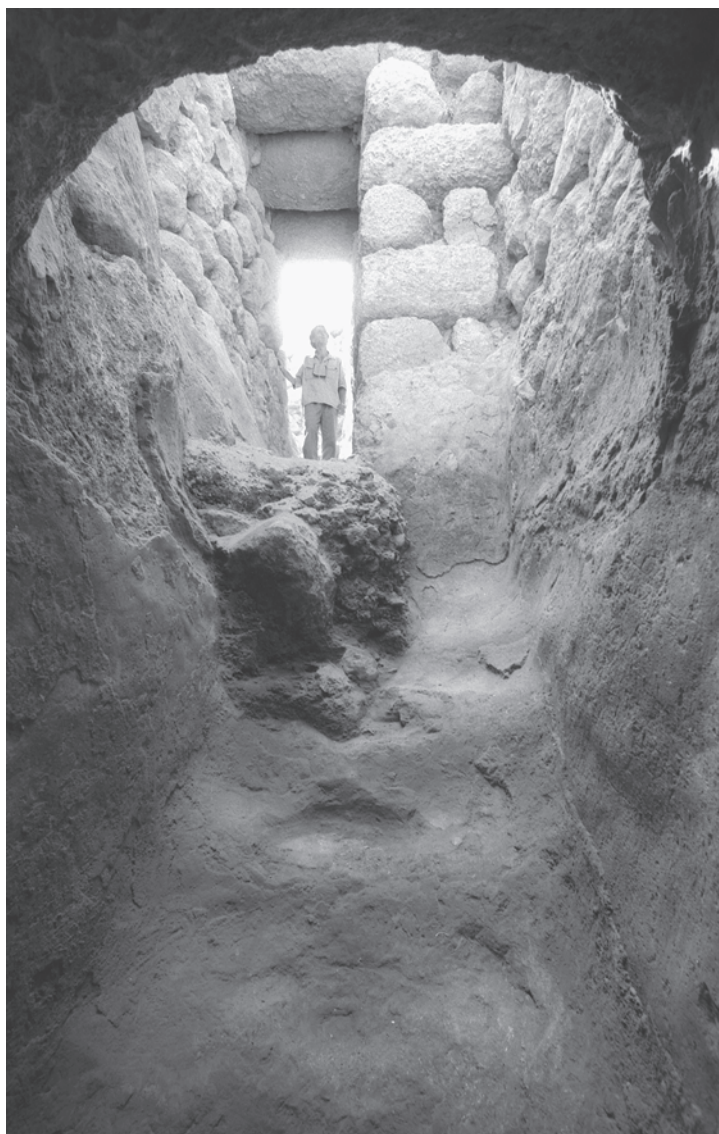


Fig. 8. Looking out from the opening of the underground water reservoir of Tel Beth-Shemesh. The hewn steps and the covered gallery comprise part of the entrance complex of the reservoir.

tive study of Beth-Shemesh and Lachish showed each to have its own biography, shaped both by similar and different events. The main lesson from our previous model of the “Sorek seesaw” and the present study of Beth-Shemesh versus Lachish is that, considering geopolitical, historical, and cultural aspects, even close sites can be far apart.

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Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On: The Possible Destruction by Earthquake of Stratum VIA at Megiddo

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Introduction

During a late-afternoon staff tell tour at Megiddo during the summer of 1998, David Ussishkin, Israel Finkelstein, and others (including the present author) participated in an animated discussion concerning what might have caused the destruction of the University of Chicago's Stratum VIA, which at the time was being uncovered in Level K-4 of the Tel Aviv University-led excavations—complete with massive quantities of shattered pottery, fallen roof beams, and crushed human remains (see now Gadot et al. 2006). Destruction by King David was briefly suggested; destruction by Pharaoh Shoshenq/Shishak was more seriously considered. The suggestion of an earthquake was met with disbelieving stares. How could an earthquake have caused so much burning and destruction in a pre-industrial-society city? However, having just finished writing two articles on earthquakes in antiquity with Amos Nur, professor of geophysics at Stanford University (Nur and Cline 2000; Nur and Cline 2001), I cited several instances where entire cities had caught fire in the premodern era as the result of earthquakes. The discussion continued for quite some time that afternoon, but we eventually left the tell with the debate unresolved.

Ever since then, regardless of the absolute date of destruction of Stratum VIA (which has been the subject of much deliberation during the past decade or more), I have thought that it is more likely to have been destroyed by an earthquake than by either King David or Pharaoh Shoshenq. Here, I am in agreement with P. L. O. Guy, one of the original University of Chicago excavators, who, despite mistakenly dating the stratum to the late 12th century B.C.E., suggested as early as 1934 that Megiddo VIA had been destroyed by an earthquake (cf. Guy 1935: 202–5; Lamon and Shipton 1939: 7; Ussishkin 1980: 6; Harrison 2004: 8–9, 107). Moreover, in the recent *Megiddo IV* volumes, two of the three codirectors of the excavation (Israel Finkelstein and Baruch Halpern), as well as two geophysicists (Shmuel Marco and Amotz Agnon), and two of the Area K supervisors (Yuval Gadot and Assaf Yasur-Landau) have also tentatively begun leaning in favor of an earthquake rather than humans as the more likely agent of destruction (Finkelstein et al. 2006: 849–50;

Author's note: Thanks are owed to Eran Arie, Norma Franklin, Stefan Münster, and Assaf Yasur-Landau for constructive criticism and suggestions on earlier drafts of this paper and to Eran Arie for his assistance in translating the relevant portions of Anabel Zarzecki-Peleg's dissertation.

Marco et al. 2006: 570–73; Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 583; but see now Finkelstein 2009).

However, the issue is still far from settled, and, in fact, a stimulating dialogue on the topic continued throughout much of the 2008 season of excavations at Megiddo, fully ten years after the original discussion. And so, in light of the new book on archaeoseismology just published by Nur and Burgess (2008), the recent publications of the University of Chicago's excavations of Megiddo VIA (Harrison 2003, 2004), and the ongoing debates regarding the absolute chronological dates of Stratum VIA (Finkelstein 2005, 2006 with earlier bibliography), it would seem to be an appropriate time to gather together the various pieces of evidence for the destruction of this stratum and see whether the cause of the destruction can finally be decided. It should be noted at the outset, however, that the question of *when* the destruction of Megiddo Stratum VIA took place is secondary in the present discussions. *How* it may have happened is of primary concern in this article—although shedding light on the *how* may help to shed further light on the *when*.

This article is dedicated to David Ussishkin, who has spent the past two decades excavating and exploring the *what*, *how*, *when*, and *why* of the stratigraphy of Megiddo, in hope that the data presented herein will help to persuade him that there was a whole lotta shakin' going on at the end of Megiddo VIA.

Physical Evidence

There is no doubt that Megiddo Stratum VIA was violently destroyed. Virtually everywhere that excavators have put tools into the earth in this layer at Megiddo, burnt mudbrick, collapsed walls, fallen roof beams, and crushed skeletons have emerged. This is especially true of the Tel Aviv University excavations within Area K (but also within Areas F, H, L, and M), where the layer is referred to as the "Burnt City." All four of the expeditions that excavated at the site to date have retrieved physical evidence for the destruction of this city, as can be briefly documented.

Gottlieb Schumacher, digging at the site from 1903 to 1905, was the first to excavate Stratum VIA, which he dug as his Layer IV, calling it the "Burnt Layer" (*Brandschicht*). In his 1908 publication, Schumacher described finding a mass of mudbricks in this layer, colored yellow-red by fire, which reached a height of two meters, and a related 20 cm-thick layer of burnt wood and ashes (Schumacher 1908: 80; cf. also Watzinger 1929: 56). He noted further that the burnt layer, which he described as a "big city fire," was made up of "mudbrick debris, cinder, coal, stones, and earth" that could be traced over a large area of the site, spreading in particular over the southern half of the tell, and that it was between 0.60 and 2.00 m thick everywhere (Schumacher 1908: 88). However, he does not mention finding any skeletons.

Schumacher's lack of human remains was in distinct opposition to the subsequent discoveries made by the University of Chicago team when they began excavating this same burnt layer in 1934. P. L. O. Guy, after directing that season's excavations at the site, published a brief description of their finds in the *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* for 1935. In this he wrote, "There was

revealed a city built almost entirely of mud-brick. . . . There were strong indications that the city had met with sudden destruction—possibly caused by an earthquake—followed by a fierce conflagration. That the place had been evacuated hurriedly was evidenced by the disposition of the great number of complete pots and other objects. . . . Numerous skeletons were unearthed, many of them of people obviously killed by falling roofs or walls and their bodies never recovered, while others have been roughly interred among the ruins of the town” (Guy 1935: 203–4). Clearly, the University of Chicago team had uncovered similar items as had Schumacher before them in this layer, but they had skeletons within the destruction as well.

Guy had earlier penned a much longer and more detailed description in a letter which he sent on July 13, 1934 to James Henry Breasted, Director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Here he wrote:

There had obviously been a disaster of some sort in VI, of which the fire was the culmination, and that disaster may have been either a battle or an earthquake. In the course of it a number of people had perished. Some skeletons were found crushed under walls in positions of obvious agony . . . but a number of others had been buried. . . . They had, however, been buried very summarily, with no orientation and practically no furniture: the most we found was a bowl over a man’s head, and a number of sherds covering the skeleton of a child of perhaps 12. A few people had been stuffed into pots, but not in the Middle Bronze fashion. It looked as if survivors had come back after the catastrophe and had left where they were those bodies that had been hidden by fallen walls but had hastily buried those who were visible. . . . The disaster, whatever it was, had been pretty sudden, for most of the rooms contained very large quantities of pottery *in situ*. . . . There [was also] . . . quite a lot of burnt wood, some pieces being posts or other structural articles but others almost certainly planted trees. (Letter from Guy to Breasted, July 13, 1934; quoted in full in Harrison 2004: 8–9)

Half a century later, in the Hebrew edition of his Megiddo book, Aharon Kempinski wrote: “It appears that the first impression of the (early) Megiddo excavators was correct and that the cause of the massive destruction was a high intensity earthquake” (Kempinski 1993: 208, as quoted in Nur and Ron 1997b: note 5). In the English version, he said: “It became quite clear to everyone who excavated these heavily destroyed strata that a much larger catastrophe than a military occupation must have happened here. The first to suggest an earthquake were the excavators of Megiddo” (Kempinski 1989: 89–90; contra Finkelstein et al. 2006: 850, where credit for the earthquake hypothesis is attributed to Kempinski).

A few years later, Douglas Esse, in restudying the records from Chicago’s 1934 excavation season, wrote about “the violent and complete destruction of Stratum VI.” Like Guy and Kempinski before him, Esse noted the presence of burnt wood in the debris field: “The destruction was so sudden and complete that charred stumps of wooden pillars were preserved on their flat stone bases.” He also noted that “many human bodies . . . had been crushed under the collapsing mudbrick walls” (Esse 1992: 88 and note 59, with Figs. 1 and 4).

Finally, a little more than a decade after Esse’s article appeared, his student Timothy Harrison published a monograph in which the results of Chicago’s 1934 excavation season, after languishing in the archives of the Oriental Institute for 70

years, finally saw the light of day (Harrison 2004). The monograph includes the letter sent by Guy to Breasted (quoted above) as well as numerous photographs depicting the destruction described by Guy, Kempinski, and Esse. These graphically illustrate, in some cases for the first time, the remains of charred material, including burnt roof beams, rows of burned wooden posts, and the scorched remnants of a tree, as well as smashed pottery, crushed skeletons, and partial burials (Harrison 2004: Figs. 29, 30–32, 72–73, 75, 80, 82–83, 90, 94).

Harrison also wrote, in a popular article for *Biblical Archaeology Review*, that

[d]etailed archival records of the Oriental Institute's excavations reveal that Stratum VI was in fact remarkably well-preserved, having been destroyed by fire. Photographs depict articulated human skeletons in various contorted poses, obviously killed by falling debris, with rooms full of smashed pottery vessels, and burnt wooden pillar supports still standing in place. Clearly, destruction was both swift and complete, freezing the settlement as it existed at the time of this event. . . . The extent of the devastation is captured in graphic photographs taken during the excavations and described in vivid detail by Guy in his correspondence with Breasted. (Harrison 2003: 32, 60)

When Yigael Yadin began his own series of limited excavations at Megiddo, during a few short seasons in the 1960s and 1970s, he too found evidence of the violent destruction of Stratum VIA. Anabel Zarzecki-Peleg, who has now published the results of Yadin's excavations at Megiddo as her dissertation at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, notes that "the height of the destruction was up to a meter" and that in Locus 6201, on the floor of Building 624 situated directly underneath Palace 6000, "a black ash layer 10 cm deep and on top of this burnt red mudbrick collapse" was found. She also notes that many of the stones here were cracked, most likely the result of the high temperatures reached during the fiery destruction (Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 10–11). In other loci, numerous partially burnt mudbricks and burnt vessels "with pieces of mudbrick adhering to them" were found, with the collapse again reaching up to a meter in height (Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 11, 13–14).

Most recently, in the Tel Aviv University-led excavations at Megiddo, remains from Stratum VIA have been uncovered in Areas F, H, K, L, and M. It is particularly well-documented in Area K, primarily because of the large horizontal exposure in this area. Here, as noted in *Megiddo IV*, "Level K-4 produced dramatic evidence of the destruction of Stratum VIA. The accumulation of brick collapse with evidence of intense fire reached, in some places, over one metre" (Finkelstein et al. 2006: 850).

The archaeologists in charge of excavating and publishing Level K-4 noted in their report that "[b]y 1996 it was already clear that Level K-4 had been violently destroyed. In some places the accumulation of the destruction layer, including the collapse, was over 1 m thick" (Gadot et al. 2006: 87). They stated further that

[t]he entire excavated area . . . is covered by the remains of Courtyard Building 00/K/10, which measures ca. 130 m², and an open space to its west. . . . The building, which was constructed of mudbricks on top of stone foundations, was violently destroyed by a fierce fire. In some places the collapse debris reached over 1 m. . . . Numerous crushed vessels were found on the floors of the building and in the mudbrick collapse . . . indicating that at least some of them fell from shelves or from the roof. (Gadot et al. 2006: 94, 97)

In all, more than 100 vessels were recovered from Level K-4 (Arie 2006: 191).

The Tel Aviv University excavators gave the following additional brief but descriptive statements in their final publication of this building, which they described as a “typical second millennium B.C.E. courtyard house” (Gadot et al. 2006: 97–98, 100–101, Figs. 7.2, 7.7–7.9, 7.13; also Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 584–85, 596):

1. Central Courtyard 00/K/10: “The floor was covered with collapsed mudbricks and a large number of crushed vessels. A human skeleton was found in the debris.”
2. Room 98/K/70: “The floor of the room was covered with a 0.7 m deep collapse composed of burnt mudbricks and charred wooden beams. Remains of one human skeleton were found below the collapse.”
3. Room 98/K/77: “A thin layer of black ash, about 5 cm thick, was traced on the floor, with a layer of burnt mudbricks more than 1 m thick on top of it. This collapse contained many restorable vessels which fell either from shelves along the room’s walls or from its roof.”
4. Room 98/K/46: “The floor of this room was covered by mudbrick debris and crushed vessels.”
5. Rooms 00/K/51 and 00/K/45: “The floor was covered by a thick layer of mudbricks and stones which sealed in a large number of vessels. . . . Walls 00/K/1, 00/K/4 and 00/K/15 were the best-preserved in the building, still standing to a height of over 1 m. . . . They lie in an almost straight line. They seem to have been distorted in some way, leaning in one direction and then in another in a wavy manner. Wall 00/K/1 had a vertical crack on its southern end. Two more vertical cracks were seen at the western end of Wall 98/K/23.”
6. Outside Building 00/K/10: “Concentrations of burnt mudbrick debris and restorable pottery were found in the northern part of Square N/11 and in Squares M/10–11.”
7. Activity area 98/K/45: “Two large fieldstones and a thick charred wooden beam found *in situ* in Square M/10 form one line which may have served as an installation. A series of beaten earth floors, each ca. 10–15 cm thick, was found in this area. The uppermost (98/K/45) was covered with black ash and burnt mudbricks. The floor and the mudbrick collapse slope to the northeast, a phenomenon noticed already in Level K-5.”
8. Square M/9: “A human skeleton was found in the eastern part of the square. The skull was intentionally covered by a nearly complete krater, indicating that the person had been symbolically buried, perhaps after being found dead in the destruction debris.”

In addition, Shmuel Marco and Amotz Agnon—two geophysicists examining the site—noted a warped wall in Level K-4. This is tilted to both sides 12°–15° and is probably one of the walls listed above in point no. 5. They also noted a pile of collapsed mudbrick in Area M (in Level M-4 from Stratum VIA) covered by a thick layer of ashes and further stated that similar piles of brick collapse can be seen in many other places across the site (Marco et al. 2006: 570, 572, Tables 31.1–2, Fig. 31.3i).

As is clear from the above, the Tel Aviv University excavators discovered human skeletal remains in several different rooms within the building uncovered in

Level K-4, as well as immediately outside it, all within the layer of destruction debris. All told, some seven or eight different individuals were identified as having been “trapped in the ruins of a conflagration and collapse” of Building 00/K/10, according to Yossi Nagar, the physical anthropologist who studied the human remains from this building. Of these, at least one was an adult woman, another was an adult of unknown gender, and three were children. The remains, which are all crushed and fragmentary, include pieces of skull and postcranial bones; various teeth including a premolar, a deciduous molar, and a lower third molar; parts of an upper limb; a lower limb; and a pelvis (Nagar 2006: 471, 472 Table 22.1 nos. 35–40).

Two of the children and the adult of unknown gender, who was 20–35 years old, were found together in a single room (98/K/70) inside the building, while the adult woman who was 30–40 years old was found in the central courtyard of the building (Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 591, 595). Other skeletal remains that were not analyzed but that included a skull, were found in additional loci within Area K (98/K/100 and Locus 98/K/125; see Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 591).

There is also some evidence that survivors of the destruction—or, alternatively, the human agents who may have caused it or perhaps even newcomers to the scene—were active in the devastated city immediately after the catastrophe. The Tel Aviv University excavators reported that outside Building 00/K/10 restorable pottery was found resting at a level about a meter higher than the floor levels inside the building. Since, during the restoration process, the sherds collected in these squares outside the building matched up with vessels found in the collapse debris inside the building, the excavators concluded that “the burnt mudbricks with broken vessels found in this corner of Area K result from post-depositional activity” (Gadot et al. 2006: 100; see also Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 586). In other words, some unknown person or persons had been digging pits and moving destruction debris around soon after the catastrophe occurred.

Moreover, some of the bodies found in Area K had obviously been deliberately buried—at least to the extent of being covered with fragments of broken vessels—rather than simply left lying where they were, just like some of the bodies found by P. L. O. Guy and the Chicago excavators in 1934 (Esse 1992: 88 and Fig. 4). A prime example is the skeleton in Square M/9 within Area K, the skull of which had not only been intentionally covered by a nearly complete krater, as mentioned above (Gadot et al. 2006: 101; Arie 2006: 196–97), but which was also found “resting with hands crossed,” leading the excavators to conclude that “after the flames expired individual survivors rummaged around the site and buried at least some of the victims” (Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 586). It is very unusual for skeletons to be covered with pottery in this manner and one wonders if the practice in Megiddo VIA came about from a lack of textiles or burial shrouds immediately following the destruction.

Several of the Tel Aviv University excavators eventually concluded:

It seems that the disaster was swift, catching most, if not all of the inhabitants of the house before they could flee. During this time, an adult, possibly a woman, was in the kitchen cooking while taking care of two children. Another woman was working in

the nearby inner courtyard. Several other adults were also struck by the destruction. One adult, found outside of the building, may have died elsewhere and was buried next to the house by survivors. However, the destruction was so total, probably affecting every house in the settlement, that the survivors, if there were any from Building 00/K/10, made no special attempt to search and properly bury the other members of the household. (Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 597)

Suggested Possible Causes

So who or what caused this total destruction, which may well have affected every house and building in Megiddo VIA? Was it David or other Israelites, or Philistines, or Shoshenq/Shishak, or was it an earthquake? Many scholars have weighed in on this question.

For example, Albright and Aharoni believed that Megiddo VI was an Israelite settlement that the Philistines destroyed during their northern expansion (Albright 1936: 38; 1937: 25; Aharoni 1972: 308–9 and n. 46; see now also Harrison 2003: 60; 2004: 12.107). On the other hand, others reversed this argument, suggesting that Megiddo VIA was probably a Philistine city that the Israelites destroyed prior to the time of David (see Davies 1986: 46–47; Kempinski 1989: 82, 89–90). Baruch Halpern has now once again raised this possibility that Stratum VIA was “destroyed in the course of an Israelite (but not Davidic) conquest of the valley ca. 980 B.C.E.” (Finkelstein et al. 2006: 851). In every case, the suggestions are no more than mere speculation, for we have no way of knowing—at the present time—whether the destruction of Megiddo VIA was caused by Philistines or Israelites, if either.

Unfortunately, some scholars have jumped from a simple description to an opinion or unproven hypothesis, which is then presented as fact. For example, in her magnum opus, *The Philistines and Their Material Culture*, Trude Dothan stated: “Megiddo VIA was totally destroyed by a fire, whose traces are visible throughout. The thick ash layers, the burnt bricks, and the profusion of buried pottery all parallel Qasile X, which suffered a similar fate. Megiddo VIA was destroyed by David, after he had broken the military supremacy of the Philistines and their hold on the Via Maris” (Dothan 1982: 80). While Megiddo VIA was unquestionably destroyed by a fire, and while its destruction may well parallel that of Qasile X, it is a leap of faith to declare that the fire was caused by King David without providing further evidence, which Dothan does not.

However, Dothan herself was simply following a suggestion made back in 1951 by Benjamin Mazar, who said: “It seems that, following upon the expansion of the Hebrew Monarchy in the days of David . . . there came far-reaching effects . . . and it is with this period that we are to associate the destruction of Tell Qasile X, of Tell Abu Hawam IV, and of Megiddo VI. The cities that were built on their ruins differ essentially from them . . . and these cities are associated with the period of the United Kingdom in Israel” (Mazar 1951: 23). Inherent in these statements is the intimation that David, or perhaps simply unnamed Israelites “in the days of David,” destroyed Megiddo VI. (Note, however, that in 1950, the year before Mazar made his suggestion, G. Ernest Wright published his own belief that David had destroyed Megiddo V, not VIA; cf. Wright 1950: 44.) Other scholars have since followed Mazar

and Dothan, but most simply cite either one or the other without presenting further evidence or even much discussion (see, for example, Davies 1986: 42, 47).

As Tim Harrison has recently and correctly noted (2004: 108), it is tremendously difficult to prove that the destruction of Stratum VIA is the result of an attack on Megiddo by David, since there is no direct evidence, textual or otherwise. However, Harrison then goes on to say that “the evidence of widespread burning and destruction preserved in the corresponding levels at other sites in the Jezreel Valley region would seem to undermine the case for a natural disaster and lend support for a military campaign.” He therefore ends up agreeing with Mazar and Dothan, concluding that “the Davidic campaigns represent the most viable historical event on record that might account for the destruction of Stratum VI” (Harrison 2004: 108). He says further, that “David . . . represents the most plausible historical figure responsible for laying waste to the community whose remains are entombed in Megiddo Stratum VIA” (Harrison 2003: 62).

One may question Harrison’s statements that David’s presumed campaign against Megiddo is the most viable candidate for the destruction of Megiddo VIA and that David represents the most plausible historical figure for laying waste to this community. As Harrison himself points out, we are never told anywhere, not even in the Hebrew Bible, that David attacked and/or captured Megiddo. This is simply an assumption made by most archaeologists and ancient historians because Strata V and IV at the site are now usually considered to be Israelite settlements (but note again that Albright considered Stratum VI to be Israelite as well and that Wright suggested David actually destroyed Stratum V). Moreover, it is by no means clear that Megiddo VIA was destroyed in the late 11th century B.C.E., i.e., at the time of David; its destruction has been variously dated in recent years to the 11th, 10th, and 9th centuries B.C.E. (see Finkelstein 2005, 2006 with earlier bibliography).

Most importantly, one may question Harrison’s statement that evidence for widespread burning and destruction in contemporary levels at other sites in the Jezreel Valley “would seem to undermine the case for a natural disaster,” for such a declaration does not sufficiently consider the widespread effects of a strong earthquake. If anything, such evidence for burning and devastation across a wide area lends itself just as well, if not better, to the idea of a destruction caused by an earthquake rather than a destruction caused by humans, as can be attested by anyone who has lived in a seismically active region such as the Jezreel Valley (or California) and as will be seen further in just a moment. However, there is one more possible human agent of destruction to consider before proceeding further.

Carl Watzinger, who published the small finds discovered by Schumacher at Megiddo, was the first to suggest that the fiery destruction of Stratum VIA (their Layer IV), was caused by Pharaoh Shoshenq I’s invasion and attack in 925 B.C.E. (Watzinger 1929: 59; cf. also Harrison 2003: 60; 2004: 7, 12, 107). The invasion, which Shoshenq recorded in an inscription on a temple in Karnak, named Megiddo among the many cities which the pharaoh claimed to have captured. The invasion has long been known to scholars and is thought by most to be the same attributed to Pharaoh Shishak in the Bible.

The suggestion that Shoshenq/Shishak was responsible for the destruction of Megiddo VIA was picked up and briefly reconsidered once again in the mid-1990s by Israel Finkelstein, as part of his larger argument for lowering the ceramic chronology of biblical Israel (Finkelstein 1996: 180, 182–83; see Harrison 2003: 30). However, after further thought, Finkelstein dismissed this possibility, suggesting that while Shoshenq/Shishak could have been responsible for the destruction of Megiddo VIA, this makes little sense in light of the victory stele that the Egyptian pharaoh subsequently erected at the site (Ussishkin 1990: 71–74; Finkelstein and Piasetzky 2006).

Finkelstein suggested instead that Shoshenq/Shishak should more likely be linked to the later stratum of Megiddo VB than with Megiddo VIA: “The second possibility, which better accords with the somewhat early ¹⁴C determination for the destruction of the Megiddo VIA horizon and with the situation in both the south and the highlands, is that Shoshenq I took over the valley in the time of Megiddo VB and its contemporary strata” (Finkelstein and Piasetzky 2006: 58). Recently, Finkelstein and his co-directors expanded on this, saying: “the possibility that Stratum VIA was destroyed by Shoshenq I in ca. 925 B.C.E. should also be ruled out since Stratum VIA probably came to an end at an earlier date. Furthermore, the fact that Shoshenq I erected a stele at Megiddo is a clear indication that he conquered it with the intention of dominating the city in the future, rather than destroying it completely” (Finkelstein et al. 2006: 850–51).

Having briefly considered the various possible named (and unnamed) human agents of destruction for Megiddo VIA, let us now discuss the criteria usually used to identify earthquake destructions in antiquity and then compare the available data from Megiddo VIA to these criteria.

Criteria for Discerning Ancient Earthquakes

As the present author and Amos Nur have written elsewhere, the criteria for the identification of possible earthquakes in antiquity are numerous (Nur and Cline 2000: 52, Fig. 9). The most diagnostic are collapsed, patched, and/or reinforced walls; walls leaning at impossible angles or offset from their original position; crushed skeletons and unretrieved bodies lying under fallen debris; widespread fires and burning; toppled columns lying like parallel toothpicks; and slipped keystones in archways and doorways (Stiros 1996: appendix 2; Nur and Ron 1997a: 532, 1997b: 50, 52–53; Nur and Cline 2000: 48).

In their recent book on archaeoseismology, Nur and Burgess (2008: 88–140) elaborate on each of the above criteria. However, perhaps the most relevant discussion concerns the evidence of fire, in the form of widespread burning, precisely because ash layers are so commonly found in archaeological excavations and because, as they say, “fires can arise from any number of causes, and as modern arson investigations show, it can be next to impossible to determine the cause after the fact” (Nur and Burgess 2008: 135). People frequently believe that huge fires following earthquakes are a modern phenomenon, “because of the predominance of wood in modern buildings, as well as the near universality of gas and electrical supply lines,

both of which are vulnerable to earthquake damage” (Nur and Burgess 2008: 138). However, as Nur and Burgess note, such a belief involves two erroneous assumptions: “first, that because ancient builders mainly used stone and mud brick, there was little to burn; and, second, that in the absence of modern utilities, there is little to cause a fire” (Nur and Burgess 2008: 138).

As Nur and Burgess point out, “[t]he assumption that ancient sites had few combustibles stems partly from an unavoidable bias in archaeology: noncombustible materials such as stone, mud brick, and metal are more readily preserved than combustible organics such as wood, fabric, and straw. Just because these materials are rare in archaeological finds, however, it is not therefore reasonable to assume they were absent in ancient life, any more than they are absent in regions today where ancient building practices persist” (Nur and Burgess 2008: 138–39). They then list numerous examples of fires caused by earthquakes in cities without modern utilities like gas and electricity, including Lisbon, Portugal, in 1755 (where after the earthquake, “cooking fires ignited a citywide conflagration that burned for three days, causing more damage . . . than the earthquake”); Basel, Switzerland, in 1356 (where the earthquake “triggered weeklong fires that destroyed the city”); Jerusalem in 363 C.E. (where “most accounts of the . . . earthquake . . . describe fires that killed many people”); and twelve cities along the Gediz River in Turkey in 17 C.E. (where the quake “was aggravated by the accompanying conflagration”; Nur and Burgess 2008: 139, with further references). Moreover, Andrew Stewart, of UC Berkeley, noted that Nicomedia burned for five days and nights after the earthquake of 358 C.E. and that in Antioch “fire destroyed most of what the earthquake of 526 did not” (Stewart 1993: 84 note 3, citing Ammianus Marcellinus, *Histories* 17.7.8 and John Malalas, *Chronicle* 17.4 [B. 419.21]).

Interestingly, Finkelstein and his co-directors reported that in Area K at Megiddo “[t]he intensity of the destruction suggests a concentration of oil storage” (Finkelstein et al. 2006: 849). Such oil, along with the wooden roof beams used in the building’s construction, would certainly have contributed to fires following an earthquake. However, the oil and wood would also have contributed to a fire following an attack and destruction by humans as well, which is why Nur and Burgess note that “fires cannot be used to either rule out or implicate earthquakes. Rather, an ash layer indicates only that a city was burned, not why or how it was burned. In cases where other evidence strongly indicates an earthquake, however, evidence of fire may help provide a fuller picture of the damage the earthquake caused” (Nur and Burgess 2008: 140).

Regarding human casualties of earthquakes, Nur and Burgess observe that most archaeologists tend to accept “crushed and broken skeletons found under rubble” as definitive evidence of earthquake destruction (Nur and Burgess 2008: 141). They note further that

[t]he destruction of a massive stone building by human hand takes some time. Given the methods employed in ancient times, people had ample time to escape when an army was hammering at a building; those inside were likely to flee the structure rather than wait for the roof and walls to crash down upon them. An earthquake, on the other hand, gives no warning, and often there is no time to do anything but cower until the shaking stops. Thus, the discovery of human remains crushed beneath their

dwelling creates a strong argument for an earthquake, rather than a militia, as the destructive force. (Nur and Burgess 2008: 141–42)

However, they also warn: “In most excavations, however, there is always room for argument. Skeletons found under rubble may be evidence of an earthquake, but one might also argue that the person was killed by human hands and that the skeleton was buried by later collapse unrelated to the cause of death.” In such cases, I would argue, one would need to look for additional evidence, such as arrowheads embedded in or lying near the skeletal remains, to make a persuasive case for a death at human hands.

So, how many of the above diagnostic criteria for earthquakes have been found in Megiddo Stratum VIA? Among the physical evidence listed above, that is, in the descriptions of the destruction debris recovered by the four archaeological expeditions to the site during the past century, we have the following:

1. Collapsed walls
2. Walls offset and/or leaning at an angle from their original position
3. Diagonal cracks in rigid walls
4. Widespread fires and burning
5. Crushed skeletons
6. Unretrieved bodies lying under fallen debris

In fact, all of the major diagnostic criteria for identifying an ancient earthquake are present in Megiddo VIA except for toppled columns and slipped keystones, but then again there are no columns or archways and doorways left in all of Stratum VIA. As a result, Amos Nur and Hagai Ron have recently written: “The tectonic situation of Megiddo astride an active fault, its closeness to the Dead Sea fault system, and the archaeological findings provide strong evidence in support of the likelihood of earthquake destruction. But the most compelling evidence at Megiddo, as elsewhere, is provided by crushed skeletons of people trapped under the collapsed rubble. This type of evidence often is accepted even by those archaeologists who otherwise dismiss earthquakes as an important cause for destruction” (Nur and Ron 2000: 51).

But again, how can one tell if the destruction of Megiddo VIA was caused by an earthquake or if it was caused by military action? These can often be difficult to tell apart, especially since the end result—total destruction of a site—frequently appears the same in the archaeological record (Nur and Cline 2000: 48; Nur and Burgess 2008: 88). However, the key distinction frequently lies not in what is found but rather in what is not found. For example, in the destruction level of Megiddo VIA there are no arrowheads or other weapons associated with the bodies or destroyed buildings within the debris anywhere on the site; there is only a single bronze spearhead found elsewhere in the stratum and a single bronze two-headed axe (which need not have been a weapon), both found by Schumacher.

By way of contrast, as has been pointed out elsewhere previously (Nur and Cline 2000: 60), we may note that the excavators of Aphek, in reporting on the destruction of Stratum X-12 at the site, dating to the end of the 13th century B.C.E., stated that “The governor’s residence . . . was destroyed in a violent conflagration; its

debris rises to a height of 2 m. This palace was destroyed in battle, as indicated by the arrowheads found in its debris and the conflagration that consumed it" (Beck and Kochavi 1993: 68). The excavators said further: "arrowheads stuck in the walls . . . [provide] eloquent testimony to the bitter fighting that raged over the storming of the palace. Additional evidence as to the nature of this catastrophe is seen in the mud-brick-and-ash debris of the palace walls and roof, which accumulated on the floor to a height of two meters or more, burned to an orange-red and cinder grey in the consuming conflagration" (Kochavi 1977: 8; cf. also Kochavi 1990: XII, XX). The description of the destruction level uncovered at Aphek Stratum X-12 sounds very similar to the descriptions of the destruction level uncovered at Megiddo Stratum VIA, except that there are arrowheads in the walls of the destroyed palace at Aphek, but none in any of the destroyed buildings or other destruction debris at Megiddo.

A similar contrast may be made with the destruction of Lachish III by Sennacherib and the Neo-Assyrians in 701 B.C.E., which was excavated by David Ussishkin from 1973–1994 (Ussishkin 1982, 2004). At first blush, Ussishkin's description of the city destroyed by Sennacherib sounds remarkably similar to the description given by the excavators of Megiddo VIA:

The monumental buildings, namely the palace-fort and the gate complex, as well as all the small dwellings and shops of the inhabitants of Lachish, were consumed by fire. . . . In many cases the heat of the conflagration was such that the bricks were reddened and baked by the fire. In some places the pile-up of burnt bricks was nearly two meters high, accumulating above the floors of the buildings. . . . The floors of the burnt buildings were discovered strewn with smashed pottery vessels and various other utensils, but there were no valuables nor human skeletons. Also, no attempt was made by the inhabitants to restore the houses or even retrieve their belongings buried beneath the debris. (Ussishkin 1982: 54; see now also description by Barkay and Ussishkin 2004: 453)

Just as at Aphek, the difference between Megiddo VIA and Lachish III lies in what was also found at Lachish III: more than a thousand arrowheads, 150 slingstones, over 75 armor scales, plus other military equipment, a siege ramp and counter-ramp within the destruction level (Ussishkin 2004: *passim*). In contrast, Megiddo VIA has none of these. In addition, Lachish III has 1,500 uncrushed skeletons in mass graves outside the city but neither buried bodies nor crushed skeletons within the destruction layer inside the city itself, while Megiddo VIA has numerous crushed human skeletons and some actual burials found within the destruction layer, but no mass graves anywhere. In short, the only commonalities at both Lachish III and Megiddo VIA are a fiery destruction and pottery smashed by falling roofs or upper storeys. Lachish III was clearly destroyed by human invaders (Ussishkin 1982: 54), but was Megiddo VIA?

Conclusions

Unlike the situation at Aphek, Lachish, and numerous other cities (Nur and Cline 2000: 60), there is not a single piece of evidence, either direct or circumstan-

tial, that suggests the destruction of Megiddo VIA was caused by human invaders, whether it be David, Shoshenq/Shishak, Israelites, Philistines, or others. Not a single arrowhead, spearhead, or other implement of war has been discovered in or even near any of the numerous skeletal remains found in this stratum, regardless of whether the bodies were located outside in the open or inside the buildings.

In contrast, there is a wide variety of circumstantial, but diagnostic, evidence that strongly suggests that the destruction of Megiddo Stratum VIA was caused by a devastating earthquake: vertical cracks noted in some of the mudbrick walls that remained standing; walls leaning at odd angles from their original position; and fierce burning and destruction across much of the site, not just in a random building here or there. There are also crushed skeletal remains—not simply skeletal remains, but crushed and unretrieved skeletal remains—found within the destroyed buildings. These are, it should be noted again, the remains of people who could easily have left those buildings in the event of invaders breaching the city walls, but who are less likely to have been able to escape in the event of a sudden earthquake striking without warning. Not one shows evidence of a violent death at the hands of invaders wielding weapons. Additional possible evidence from a variety of other sites with destructions which might be dated to this same time period, including Yoqne'am XVII, Beth Shean Upper VI, Rehov VII, Kinrot V, Hadar IV, Dan IVB, Dor G-7, Keisan 9a, Qasile X, and Rekhesh, may provide additional support for the idea that the hypothesized earthquake would have affected a much wider area than simply the Jezreel Valley (Kempinski 1989: 89–90; Stewart 1993: 30–36; Nur and Ron 2000: 51; Arie 2006: 227–31; Finkelstein et al. 2006: 850; Nur and Burgess 2008: 146–49; see also Table at http://www.kinneret-excavations.org/tel_kinrot.html).

It is also worth reiterating that it is not necessary to have modern utilities present or to be obliged to envision “warriors of the conquering force walk[ing] systematically from house to house carrying burning torches and setting fire to everything that could be burned” (Finkelstein et al. 2006: 850) in order for a fire to destroy a city in its entirety. As we have seen, there are numerous examples of devastating fires caused by earthquakes in premodern cities which did not have gas, electricity, or other modern utilities, including Lisbon in 1755, Basel in 1356, Antioch in 526, Jerusalem in 363, Nicomedia in 358, and 12 cities along the Gediz River in Turkey in 17 C.E. None of these show any evidence of a systematic torching of the city by a conquering force of warriors, but all were completely, or nearly completely, devastated by fires following an earthquake.

Moreover, the facts that some of the bodies in Megiddo Stratum VIA were buried (i.e., to the extent of having pottery sherds placed over them) and that there was some post-depositional activity in Area K soon after the catastrophe occurred, indicate that someone—perhaps a few of the survivors—did return to the settlement immediately after the destruction (contra Finkelstein et al. 2006: 850). Although the city was apparently not resettled or even rebuilt right away, this does not necessarily mean that all the inhabitants of Megiddo had been killed or enslaved and exiled, as was the case at Lachish Level III for instance, but may simply indicate that their confidence, as well as homes and properties, had been severely shaken, which

is why it may have taken new people arriving in the area to eventually resettle the site and rebuild the city. It may also be the case that the earthquake affected a far larger area than just Megiddo, as mentioned above, and that a larger portion of Canaanite society as a whole was affected, perhaps even to the extent that one might speculate that the Israelites were able to take advantage of the natural catastrophe and incorporate it into their efforts to put an end to Canaanite rule in the region.

In sum, although it is not clear *when* the destruction of Megiddo VIA actually took place—for the current ongoing chronological debate is far from being resolved—that does not change the fact that the data indicate the devastation is much more likely to have been caused by an earthquake than by human invaders. There was certainly a whole lotta shakin' going on at the end of Megiddo VIA, but it wasn't because David, Shoshenq/Shishak, or any other warriors were celebrating a great military victory. More likely it was because Mother Nature was exerting her presence in the region once again, by sending a city-destroying earthquake, as she has done so many times over the centuries in this volatile, seismically active area of the world.

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Tel Azekah: A New Look at the Site and Its “Judean” Fortress

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Introduction

The excavations at Tel Azekah (Tell Zakariya), which took place over 110 years ago, represent an important landmark in the development of archaeological research in the Judean Shephelah (Fig. 1). In 1898, F. J. Bliss and R. A. S. Macalister began a project of archaeological research over an extensive area on behalf of the British Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF). This area contained within it three tells: Tel Azekah, Tel Zafit, and Tel Goded—which they believed to be the most important mounds in the Shephelah—and the ruins between them. However, the two years awarded them in the excavation permit were insufficient for such an ambitious agenda, as “in so brief a space nothing could be done but to make a number of soundings on some of the selected sites” (Macalister 1925: 51). The project began with the excavation of test trenches at Tel Azekeh. After one excavation season, work was transferred to Tel Zafit, then returned to Tel Azekah for two additional seasons. From there, the expedition continued to Tel Goded, and finally, large-scale excavations were conducted at Tel Maresha (Tell Sandahannah; Fig. 2).¹

This excavation project was actually the first regional study to be conducted within the borders of the Land of Israel. The publication of a comprehensive excavation report of all four sites, the presentation of finds from all the excavated sites according to periods and material, the first attempt to create a typological catalogue of the pottery types, and a stratigraphic discussion of all the tells and caves within the borders of their research project—all these introduced a new research method, i.e., archaeological excavations over a defined geographical region, a method that continued to develop in the following years resulting in a variety of regional research projects covering defined, homogenous geographical areas.

In this article, I wish to concentrate on the finds of one of these mounds—Tel Azekah.

Author's note: It is an honor to contribute this short note to the collection of articles dedicated to Prof. David Ussishkin, with whose aid and support many studies of the Judean Shephelah have been accomplished. I wish to thank Dr. Shelley Sadeh for translating the article from Hebrew, and Ruhama Bonfil for preparing the map of the Shephelah. Prof. Israel Eph'al and Hillel Geva kindly read the manuscript and offered valuable comments.

1. Tel Maresha, 14.8 km from Tel Zafit, was not in the original excavation plan but was included toward the end of the project.

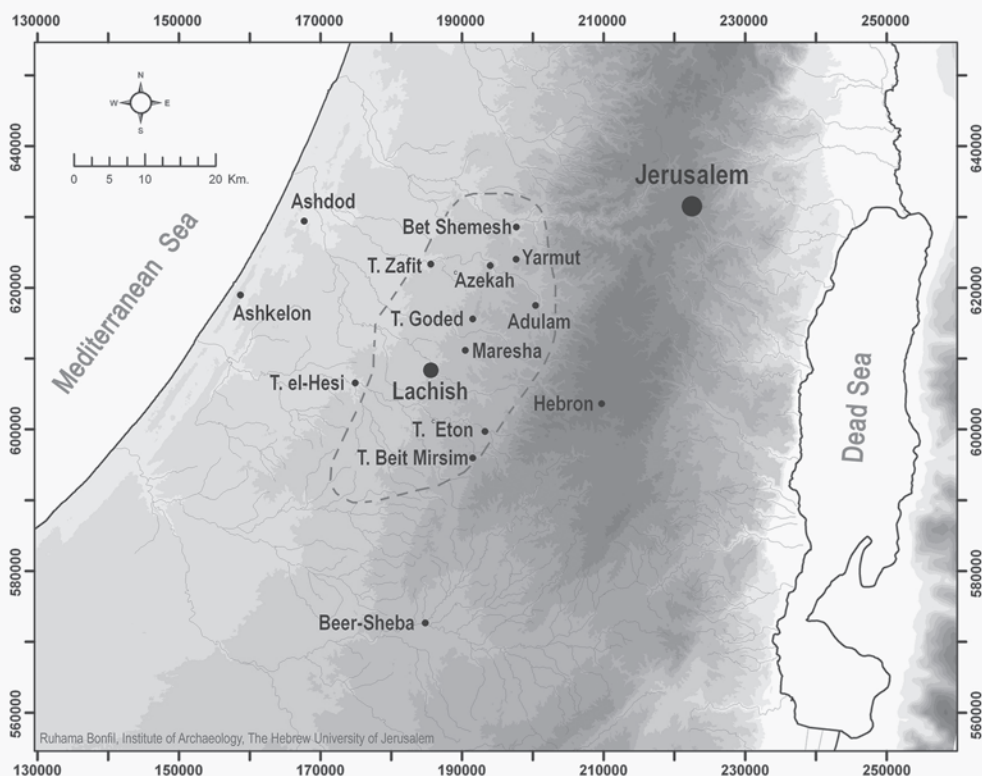


Fig. 1. Map of the Judean Shephelah.

Tell Site

Tel Azekah (OIG 14400/12315; NIG 19400/62315) is located on the summit of a ridge running north–south that forms the prominent borderline between the lower Shephelah to the west and the upper Shephelah to the east² (see Buchbinder 1969: 5–6). The ridge is traversed by Naḥal Elah, which meanders westward from the Judean Hills and encircles the tell on three sides. The slopes of the tell descend steeply towards the stream on the west, north, and east, from a height of ca. 127 m above the streambed (Fig. 3). On the south, the tell is joined to the ridge by a low saddle,

2. The identification of the biblical town of Azekah at Tell Zakariya is unanimously accepted by scholars. E. Robinson and E. G. Smith, who visited the tell in 1840, did not suggest any identification, although they realized its strategic importance (Robinson and Smith 1856: II, 20–21). Y. Schwartz (1865: 122) was the first to identify it. In the British Survey of Western Palestine, the site is described without any suggested identification (Conder and Kitchener 1881–1883: 441). The excavators of the mound accepted the suggestion of Schwartz, especially after it gained the support of A. G. Smith (1894: 61–62; Bliss 1899b: 98; Bliss and Macalister 1902: 66–67; Macalister 1925: 25. See also Abel 1938: II: 90; Kallai 1967: 322; Stern 2001: 130–51; Rainey and Notley 2006: 155).

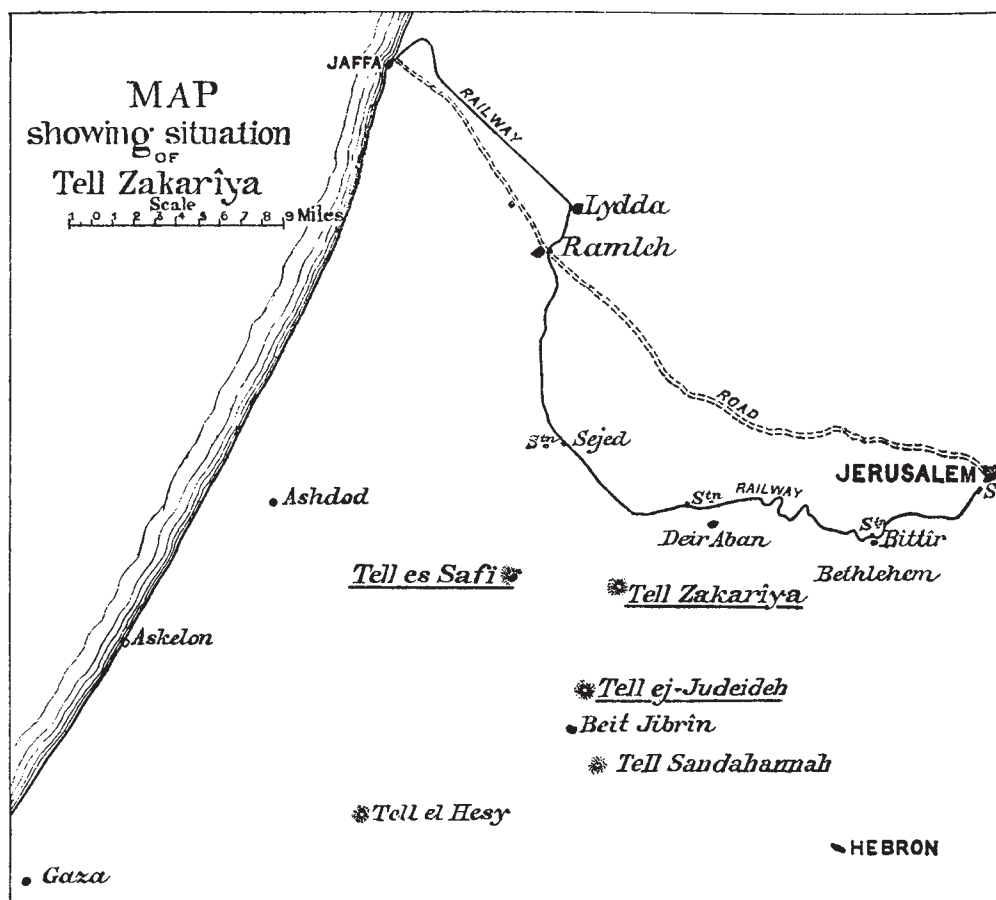


Fig. 2. Map, "showing situation of sites excavated," published by Bliss and Macalister (1902: Fig. 1).

only ca. 30 m below it. This saddle was probably artificially lowered in ancient times for defensive purposes.³

Tel Azekah is triangular, extending over some 45 dunams, with its base on the southwest and its point facing northeast. Its maximum length is 300 m and its maximum width is 150 m. Today, the surface of the tell is flat, with a high mound (the acropolis) in the southeastern corner extending over 5.8 dunams. On the surrounding slopes of the tell, many cave openings are visible, some of which were surveyed by Macalister (1899: 25–36; 1900: 39–53). On the northeastern slope is a rock terrace in which ancient water cisterns were hewn. During the survey of the

3. There is no doubt that the city gate was located on the southern side, where the approach was easiest. It follows, therefore, that the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests of Azekah also came from this direction. Any remains in the saddle (siege ramp, camp, ballistic stones) would have been removed during later construction on the tell during the Hellenistic period (see below).



Fig. 3. Tel Azekah and the Valley of Elah (1898). Looking southwest: the “acropolis” on the left (PEF Archives).

Judean Shephelah in the 1980s, the area of the tell was examined extensively, including the slopes and the surrounding hills (Dagan 1983, 1986, 1992, 1993, 1996).

Azekah in the Historical Sources

The town of Azekah is mentioned six times in the Bible. In the books of Joshua and 1 Samuel, it is a geographical landmark, while in the book of Jeremiah (34:7), Azekah and Lachish are described as the last two cities to surrender to the Babylonian army. It is also included in the list of places fortified by King Rehoboam.

Azekah, as the second most important city in the Shephelah after Lachish, controlled the fertile Valley of Elah and the nearby valleys and dominated the ascent to the Judean Hills from the coastal plain. It was apparently the military and economic center of the central Shephelah and the areas to the west (see, for example, Katz 2008a: 61–82; 2008b: 5–16). The extrabiblical historical sources describe Lachish and Azekah as strategic targets of the utmost importance for the military campaigns of the Assyrians to southern Israel⁴ (Naʾaman 1974, 1977, 1979, 1986; Ussishkin 1977; 2004: 76–95; Cogan 2003: 73–75; Tadmor 2006: 243–45) and during the Babylonian conquest (Jer. 34:7; Torczyner 1938: 75–92; Stern 2001: 189–91; Lipschits 2004: 19–118; Ahituv 2005: 63–69).

4. There is no consensus as to which Assyrian campaign the “Azekah Inscription” should be attributed—that of Sargon II (e.g., Galil 1995: 327–29; 2002: 79–85) or the campaign of Sennacherib (Naʾaman 1974: 25–36), which is, in my opinion, more likely. If Sargon II were to carry out a campaign against Azekah, he would have conquered all the cities of the Shephelah. See also Younger 2003: 238–47.

In the book of Nehemiah (11:30), Azekah is described as a destination of the returning Babylonian exiles. From the Hellenistic period, no sources mention Azekah, and it apparently fell under the shadow of neighboring Maresha, which had by now become the central city of Idumea. In the early Byzantine period, Eusebius identifies the biblical town of Azekah as being located between Beth Guvrin-Eleutheropolis and Emmaus. From this time on, the ancient name was forgotten, and during the Byzantine period the name became corrupted, and the site was identified with the burial place of St. Zakariya (Avi-Yonah 1953: 151).

The Excavation Results

Tel Azekah was excavated for three seasons, during the years 1898–1899, when short reports appeared in the PEF *Quarterly Statement* (Bliss 1899a, 1899b, 1899c, 1900). A final report was published two years after the excavations were completed (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 12–27).

In the first stage of the project, after surveying the tell, Bliss and Macalister (1902: 13–23) set for themselves four main goals (Fig. 4):

1. To study the towers at the southwestern edge of the tell
2. To trace the acropolis wall (the walls of the fortress)
3. To excavate within the fortress area
4. To excavate a large "clearance pit" on the tell (along the line of sections C–D, measuring 80 × 60 feet [17.6 × 23.5 m])

In order to understand the relationship between the present surface of the tell and the bedrock, the excavation began with 16 shafts dug into the debris along three parallel lines, producing sections in the tell from east to west: A–B (the northernmost), C–D (the central section), and E–F (the southernmost; Fig. 4). Few architectural remains were discerned in these shafts, mainly segments of mud flooring. From examination of the color of the soil and the pottery sherds, the excavators concluded that the tell debris was comprised of two main strata: the upper "Jewish" stratum and the lower "pre-Israelite" stratum (Bliss 1899a: 23; 1900: 7–8). Within these two strata, five different ceramic groups were discerned. In the section drawings, the excavators note the types of sherds found in each layer (Bliss 1899a: 17, Pl. 1; Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 2). Table 1 presents the ceramic groups of the excavators and their equivalents in modern archaeological terminology.

In the first season, a number of test pits were also excavated within the fortress on the acropolis, and here as well, no walls were revealed; only when the larger exposures were opened inside the fortress were sections of walls unearthed. From the towers uncovered along the southwestern margins of the tell, only the foundations remained, and the areas between them were not excavated (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 13–14, Fig. 4: III-I).

When we examine the finds published from Tel Azekah,⁵ together with those from our archaeological survey, a chronological table of occupation at Tel Azekah

5. Between 1990 and 1994, I examined the finds from the four tells of the Shephelah in the Rockefeller Museum and in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, and the documentation in the

Table 1. The five ceramic groups defined by the excavators of Tel Azekah (from earliest to latest) and their modern equivalents*

Azekah Ceramic Group	Modern Equivalent
A: Archaic ware (Petrie's "Amorite")	Early Bronze Age II–III
P: Phoenician ware	Late Bronze Age I–II
J: Jewish ware	Iron Age I–II
G: Greek ware (or "Seleucidan")	Persian, Hellenistic (Early and Late)
R: Roman ware	Roman

* Based on my personal examination of the material from the excavations stored in the Rockefeller Museum and the Istanbul Archaeological Museum.

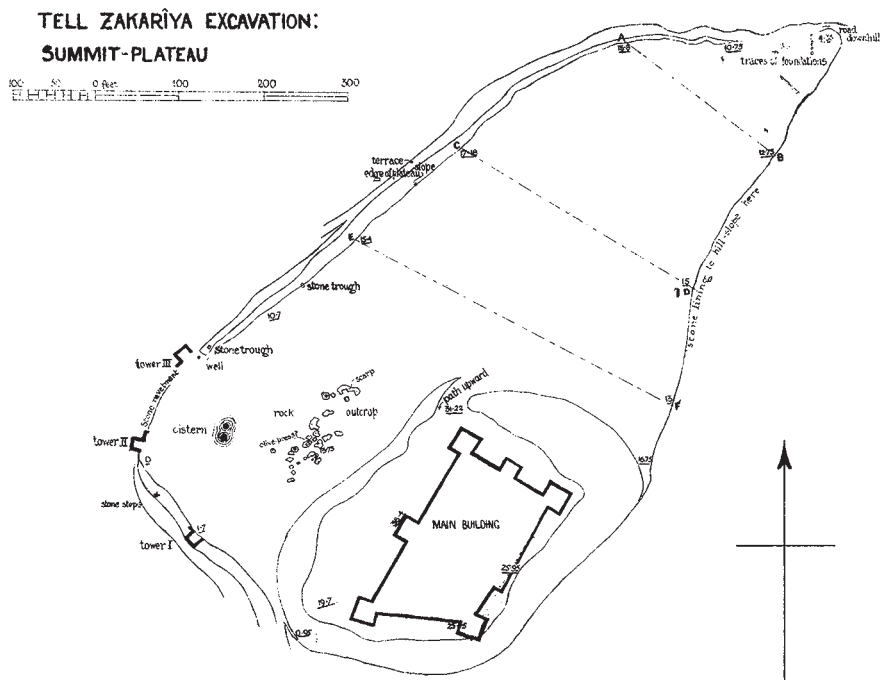


Fig. 4. Plan of the tell (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 2).

can be assembled (Table 2). It is evident that settlement at Tel Azekah began in the Early Bronze Age II–III (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pls. 43: 7, 9; 45:18). Isolated sherds from the Intermediate Bronze Age were collected during the survey, while Middle Bronze Age II vessels were uncovered during the excavations on the tell (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 34: 5, 14) and sherds were also retrieved in the archaeological survey. An earthen rampart detected in the survey, which apparently encircled the tell, may belong to this period, although without excavation this can-

PEF offices in London. When I compared the published illustrations with the museum catalogues, it became clear that many finds have disappeared and only the illustrations remain; see Dagan and Kempinski 1992: 68–70.

Table 2. Periods of occupation at Tel Azekah based on the excavation and survey results*

Period	Source
Early Bronze II–III	Excavation and survey
Intermediate Bronze	Survey
Middle Bronze II	Excavation and survey
Late Bronze I–II	Excavation and survey
Iron I–II	Excavation and survey
Persian	Excavation and survey
Hellenistic	Excavation and survey
Roman	Excavation and survey
Byzantine	Survey
Early Islamic	Survey

* The Judean Shephelah Survey (Dagan 1983, 1986, 1992, 1993, 1996)

not be determined. During the Late Bronze Age there apparently was a settlement here that commanded one of the routes ascending to the Judean Hills, and many finds were recovered, including Egyptian objects such as scarabs and amulets (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pls. 30: 1, 2; 31: 10; 33: 8–9; 34: 12; Bunimovitz and Zimhoni 1990: 471). Sherds and many other finds from the Iron Age I–II have been retrieved (Bliss 1899c: Pls. V–VI; Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pls. 33: 1, 2, 4; 34: 16; 43: 1; 49: 3; 54: 3; 56; Amit 1991), and it appears that the three towers on the edge of the tell can be dated to this period (as opposed to the opinion of the excavators; see below). From the section drawing it is evident that the foundations of these towers do not resemble those of the walls of the fortress. A few finds from the Persian period are evidence of an occupation during this period (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl: 56, No. 44; Stern 2006). From the Hellenistic and Roman periods, many remains were uncovered in the excavations (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pls. 49: 2, 9; 50: 3, 6) and in the surrounding caves during our survey. It should be noted that the fortification wall and the towers around the tell were dated by the excavators to the Roman or Byzantine period (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 13–14). In our archaeological survey, dwelling caves were found on the northern and western slopes containing sherds from the Byzantine and Early Islamic periods.

In the following discussion, I will concentrate on the results of the excavations in the fortress on the acropolis and suggest its probable period of construction based on comparative material from excavations and surveys.

The Fortress

The Finds

The fortress was the main structure excavated at Tel Azekah (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 14–23, Pl. 3). It has an irregular, quadrilateral shape that was apparently

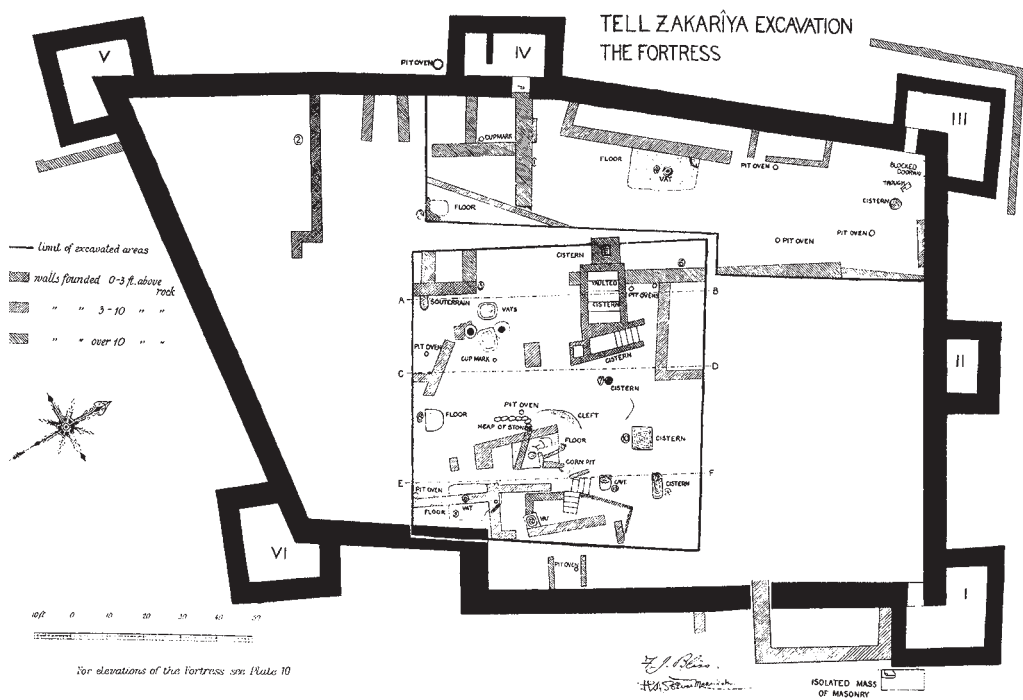


Fig. 5. Plan of the fortress (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 3).

adapted to the topography of the site. Prior to excavation, the remains of the walls were visible above the surface, and thus the excavators were able to prepare a plan immediately on beginning excavation (Fig. 5; see Bliss 1899a: Pl. 2; 1899b: Pl. 1). The excavation followed the lines of the walls of the fortress along both the inner and outer faces (apparently, along the southern wall this was partially carried out by way of tunnels⁶), which resulted in the fortress walls being disconnected from the debris layers on either side. The foundations of the walls reached a great depth (6–7.5 m), sometimes resting on the bedrock and at other times built upon the apparent remains of earlier walls (Fig. 6, lower; see Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 5). The fortress has six towers, four at the corners and two in the center of the northern and western walls, respectively (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 15, Pl. 3). The entrance to the fortress was not located and, in the opinion of Bliss and Macalister, should be sought in the southern wall. Towers I, III, and IV had entrances opening towards the interior of the fortress. The entrances to Towers II and VI were not discerned, and Tower V was ruined. The excavators note that the walls were not built in a homogenous manner (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 16–19). They also state that all the towers were joined to the main wall after it was built, although this point has not been sufficiently clarified. Within the area of the fortress (ca. 2.3 dunams), no walls or floors could be connected with the outer walls to aid in dating the construction.

6. Bliss also used this tunnel method in his excavation of the fortification wall at Jerusalem in the years 1894–1897 (Bliss and Dickie 1898).

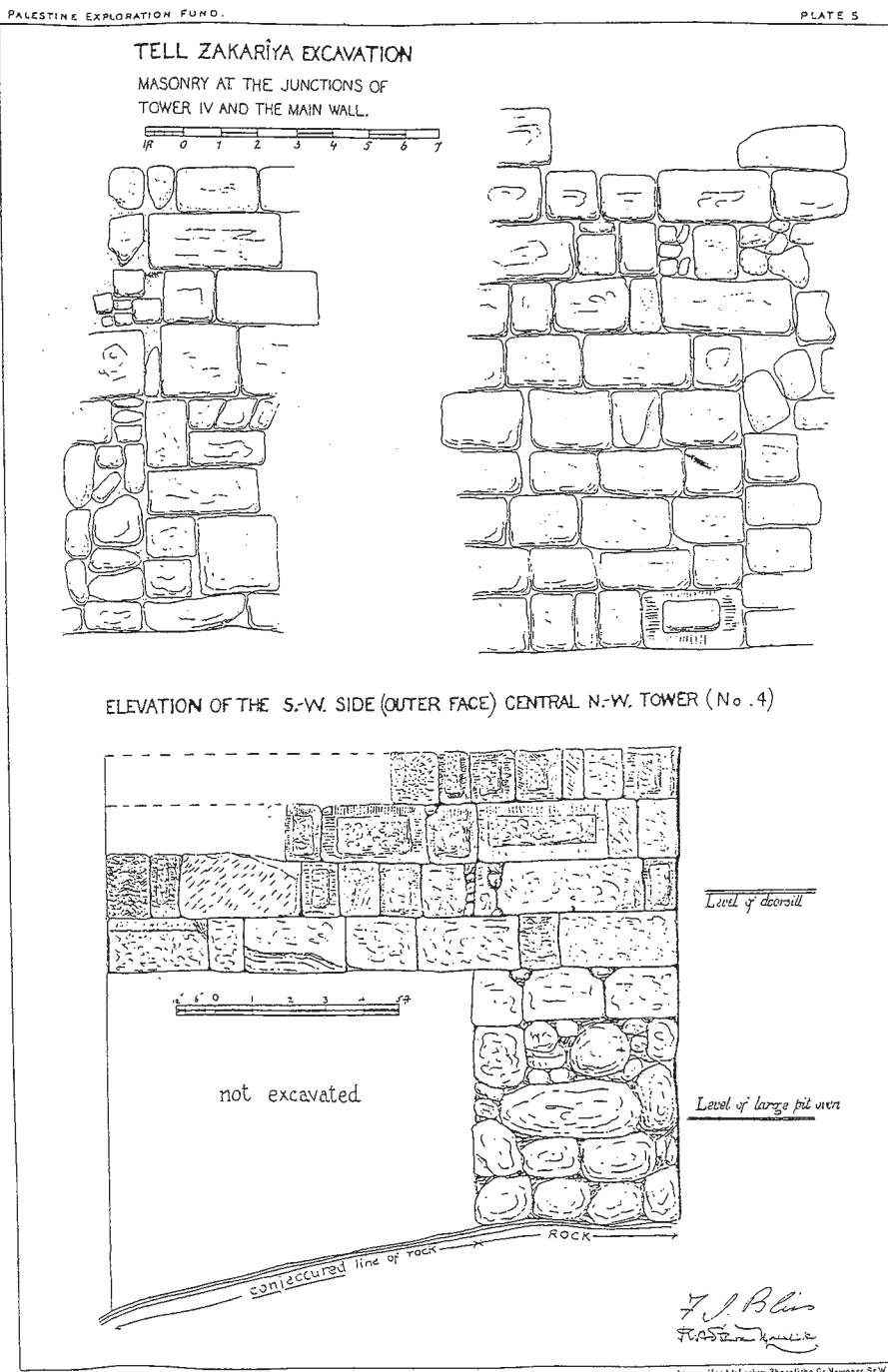


Fig. 6. Upper: Drawing of the joint of the foundations of the main wall with Tower IV (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 5, upper). Lower: Drawing of the foundation wall of Tower IV (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 5, lower).

Within the interior of the fortress, approximately half of the area was exposed to bedrock, in a rough square measuring 25.9×24.3 m, comprised of four strips measuring 4.5–9 m. At first, a strip to the west was excavated to bedrock, and the walls and the sections drawn and documented. Then another strip was excavated, and the soil from this strip was used to refill the previous strip, and thus the excavation continued eastwards. Based on the published sections (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 3), segments of floors associated with fragmentary walls were uncovered on or near the bedrock. Also discovered within the fortress were water cisterns, oil-pressing vats (similar to those from Tel Batash, Tel Beth-Shemesh, Zanoah, and Tell Beit Mirsim), hewn basins, an opening to a burial cave (Bliss 1899c: Pl. IV, No. 11), and a ritual bath or *miqveh* (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 21–22, Pl. 4, section AB).⁷ An additional area was excavated between Tower III (northeastern) and Tower IV (center of the western wall). Based on the excavators' descriptions, it appears that additional areas were dug within the fortress, although the results are not illustrated.⁸

In the opinion of the excavators, the fortress was constructed in two stages: the lower stage was attributed to the fortification system of King Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:9), while the upper stage (addition of the towers) was dated to the Hellenistic period (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 23).

Based on the descriptions of the finds, it seems to me that occupation on the acropolis can be assigned to four general periods: (1) Early Bronze Age II–III, (2) Late Bronze Age I–II/ Iron Age I (to this period can be attributed the many Egyptian finds), (3) Iron Age IIA–C (to this period belong the 17 *lmlk* and 8 rosetta stamp impressions), and (4) the Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods. Within this uppermost stratum, Bedouin graves (dating to the Ottoman period) were also dug.

The Date of the Fortress

The dating of the fortress by its excavators to the Iron II was unanimously accepted (see Avi-Yonah and Yeivin 1955: 289–90; Stern 1971: 133–37; 1993: 124; Aharoni 1987: 266; Seger 1997: 243; Negev and Gibson 2001: 64). It seems reasonable to assume that during this period Azekah was defended by massive fortifications, that it could have accommodated a garrison, and that it had storehouses for emergency provisions. Yet, no clear evidence of any of this was found in the excavation. On the acropolis at Tel Lachish, a large Iron II royal building, the "Palace-Fort," was exposed by the British expedition (Tufnell 1953: 52–58, Pls. 19:1–3, 120), and further excavated by David Ussishkin (2004: II, 768–870, Fig. 14:8). A similar structure would certainly be expected on the acropolis at Azekah. However, the construction method of the foundations of the Palace-Fort and its plan are completely different from those of the fortress exposed at Tel Azekah.

7. See Reich 1990: 281–82.

8. None of the excavated remains are visible on Tel Azekah today, as the surface was back-filled and leveled after the excavations. This was carried out due to a promise made by Bliss to the local sheikh that the land would be returned in condition to be cultivated (Letter No. -/88-1 dated Nov. 13, 1899). We also learn from this letter that after completion of the excavation, a number of test pits were excavated around the foot of the tell and on the low terrace to the south, although there is no further documentation of this operation.

The question arises, what happened to this important Judahite town that was one of the main objectives of the Assyrian and Babylonian armies? In the limited excavations at Azekah, no significant remains were exposed.

From the Persian period, no architectural remains were recovered. The few finds from this period indicate that there was probably some occupation in another part of the tell. Also from the Hellenistic period, the finds from within the fortress are very sparse and do not aid us in dating it.

The major difficulty in dating the fortress stems from the fact that due to the method of excavation, the excavators could not definitively attribute any floor level to any stage of the fortress. During the excavation inside the fortress, parts of early walls were revealed below the walls of the fortress (for example, in the northeastern corner), although their stratigraphic connection is unclear. The excavation method, which was still in its early years of development, lacks sufficient stratigraphic data and illustrative material and does not enable us to reexamine the chronological conclusions drawn by the excavators. However, the overall impression from the available archaeological evidence casts doubt on the attribution of the fortress to the Iron Age, even if the builders of the fortress may have based their walls in some places upon earlier foundations from this period; as described by the excavators (no section published), jar handles with *lmlk* stamp impressions were found upon a floor immediately above the bedrock, which was located some 4–5 m below the entrances to the towers (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 20).

It is evident from the sparse documentation that there were a number of building stages, the walls of the structure were not of homogenous construction (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 5), and the towers were apparently added at some later stage. From the examples I will bring below, it seems clear that the plan, building techniques, and masonry are all of Hellenistic date.

To learn of the building methods of the fortress, we must rely on the single plate that was published (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 5), presenting two drawings of the walls of Tower IV.⁹ From one drawing (Fig. 6, lower), it is evident that the foundation wall of the tower was built upon an earlier wall that rested on bedrock (perhaps dating to Iron II). Above it, the wall contains rows of headers and stretchers in a mixture of masonry, including stones with marginal drafting and prominent bosses typical of the Hellenistic period (Geva 1985: 28, Fig. 4; Sharon 1987). In the drawing of the joint of Tower IV with the main wall (Fig. 6, upper) at the bottom of the foundation wall can be seen a single stone with similar bossing characteristic of the Hellenistic period. The question arises, what is this stone doing in a foundation wall some 4.5 m below the surface? It can be suggested that we have here evidence of two chronological phases of construction within the Hellenistic period. The first phase is represented by the well-dressed, upper courses in Fig. 6 (lower), which stood above ground and contained bossed stones. This fortress was destroyed (perhaps during the campaign of John Hyrcanus against Maresha in 112 B.C.E.) and

9. The only photo from the excavations in the fortress (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Fig. 5) shows a well-built wall of stones of various sizes and types, which is clearly a foundation wall that cut through all the earlier layers down to bedrock.

reconstructed using the same plan and foundations (Fig. 6, upper), while incorporating bossed stones from the destroyed fortress. The towers were added in this later stage and thus the appearance of a bossed stone in the tower foundation wall.

It remains, now, to examine the plan of the fortress. The closest example of a structure with a similar plan is that of Hellenistic Maresha.¹⁰ The dating of the fortifications of Maresha is well established and has been further confirmed in the renewed excavations by Kloner (2003: 9–18). An additional fortress of similar plan was surveyed in 1964 by L. I. Rachmani (1964: 214–15, Pl. 2) at Khirbet Rasm ed Dab'a (South), in the framework of a partial survey of the Adulam area. Within the framework of the survey of the Judean Shephelah (Bet Guvrin Map, No. 107), the site was resurveyed a number of times, during which numerous sherds from the Early and Late Hellenistic and Byzantine periods were collected (Dagan 1983, 1986).¹¹ Several researchers have attempted to attribute this fortress to the system of Iron Age fortresses that defended the southern approaches to Jerusalem, such as Khirbet Abu et-Twein (Mazar 1982: 106–8). However, the plan of the fortress at Khirbet Rasm ed Dab'a (South) does not resemble that of the fortress uncovered at Khirbet Abu et-Twein, which is square without towers at the corners (Mazar 1982: Fig. 2).¹² The plan of the fortress at Khirbet Rasm ed Dab'a resembles more closely the fortress at Azeka. Another Hellenistic fortress was surveyed in the Jerusalem Hills at Ḥorvat Tura, which commands a view of Azekah. From the preliminary plan, it is clear that the walls conform to the topography, although it is uncertain if there were towers (Zissu 2008). Fortresses with similar plans have also been uncovered at two sites in the Upper Galilee. On the summit of Mt. Qeren Naftali, a fortress with towers was revealed in the excavations of M. Aviam and dated to the Hellenistic period (Aviam 1997: 97–105; 2004: 59–88, Fig. 7.4). This fortress is irregular in its plan, with eight towers. At Ḥorvat Tefen, a fortress was discovered by R. Frankel and N. Getzov. This fortress was not excavated, but its plan has been published (Frankel and Getzov 1987: 163–65). This construction method—of attaching towers to the outer face of the wall—is also seen in city walls of this period, such as Jerusalem (Geva 1985: 24, Fig. 3, 32–34; Geva and Avigad 2000: Plan 3.2, Photo 3.44) and the fortifications of Dor (Sharon 1991: 110; Stern et al. 1995: 38–44, Pl. 4.5). Finally, in the framework of the Pella excavation project in Jordan, a Hellenistic fortress was uncovered at the site of Tell Hammeh, with an irregular plan adapted to the contours of the topography and a number of towers—some built into the wall and others attached to it from the outside (McNicol et al. 1992: 103–18, Fig. 15).

10. For a discussion of the plan of Maresha, see Horowitz 1980: 111.

11. The site is called Ḥorvat Ahban in Hebrew (OIG 14313/11690; NIG 19313/61690).

12. The Iron Age structures uncovered at Khirbet Abu et-Twein (Mazar 1982), Deir Ba'al (Kochavi 1972: 41) and Khirbet el-Qatt (Kochavi 1972: 78) appear to be isolated observation forts. Observation forts on elevated summits played an important role in the defense system of Judah. They comprised specialized buildings, manned year-round, which passed on warnings of imminent attack to the capital city through the "communication network" of that period, using fire and smoke signals. In the survey of the Judean Shephelah we discerned three such forts, two on the banks of the eastern section of Nahal Elah (Dagan in preparation), and another in the southeastern Shephelah (Dagan 2006: Site No. 761). The plans of these structures, as well as those uncovered in the Judean Hills, do not resemble that exposed at Azekah.

The technique of building fortifications (for cities or fortresses) according to the topography, with some towers incorporated into the wall and others attached to the exterior of the wall after its construction, is also known from the military architecture of this period at sites outside of the Land of Israel. In ancient Larisa in Thessaly, a wall surrounding the royal buildings on the ancient acropolis was adapted to the contours of the topography; the wall has many towers, some of them incorporated into it and some attached to it afterwards. The first stage of construction is dated to the 5th century B.C.E., while the towers were attached during the 3rd century B.C.E. (Lawrence 1967: Fig. 134). At the site of Epidauros Limera in the Peloponnese, the walls of the acropolis were adapted to the topography with towers attached afterwards (Lawrence 1979: Fig. 24).

Summary

The towering summit of Tel Azekah, dominating one of the major routes ascending to the Judean Hills, lent the city its strategic importance within the royal administration of the Judean Shephelah. The emphasis in the historical sources on Azekah and Lachish as the last two fortified cities to fall to the Babylonians in 586/7 B.C.E. is further evidence of their status as two prominent fortified administrative cities in the final days of the Judahite kingdom.

In the excavations at Tel Lachish, the destruction layers left by the Assyrians in 701 B.C.E. (Level III) and the Babylonians in 586/7 B.C.E. (Level II) were clearly discerned. At Tel Azekah, however, no definite evidence of these destructions was uncovered, although the finds clearly indicate that the town was occupied during these periods.¹³

The pioneering excavations at Tel Azekah have enabled us to assemble a chronological table of the settlement history of the site (Table 2), although the excavation methods limit our ability to understand the relationship between the architecture and the finds. The main structure excavated on the tell was the fortress on the acropolis. Its importance stems from its location on the summit of the tell, a symbol of the ruling regime that was visible from afar, as well as a look-out commanding a considerable area (including Tel Lachish and its surroundings).

Although a royal fortress must have stood on Azekah during the Iron II, similar to that at Lachish and other Judahite sites, little has survived of it. It seems to me that both phases of construction of the fortress at Azekah should be attributed to the Hellenistic period, in the 3rd or 2nd century B.C.E., even if it rests on an earlier structure and made use of its predecessor's masonry (a similar phenomenon can be seen at Tel Beer Sheba [Aharoni 1973: Pl. 85], in the gate complex at Ḥorvat Qeiyafa [Dagan 2009: 76], and perhaps also at Ḥorvat 'Uza [Fischer and Tal 2007]). The examples presented above of building plans and techniques from the Hellenistic period in Israel and surrounding lands clearly resemble those of the fortress at Azekah.

13. A number of arrowheads were recovered, evidence of battles that took place there. However, there is no mention in the text of their context (Bliss and Macalister 1902: Pl. 79:1–9, 12–14, 16–17).

In addition, the settlement system of the Hellenistic period represents a renewed prosperity in the Shephelah (Dagan 2006: 40*–41*; forthcoming).¹⁴

In short, the fortress at Azekah correlates well with the administrative and defensive systems of the Hellenistic period.

14. According to the most recent data from the Judean Shephelah survey (June 2009), 133 Persian survey sites have been documented, of which 44 are defined as settlement sites (cities, villages, farmsteads, etc.). From the Hellenistic period, 269 survey sites are documented, including 90 settlement sites of various categories. The survey also revealed intensive agricultural activity during the Hellenistic period on either side of the Valley of Elah (Dagan forthcoming).

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Why Did Nebuchadnezzar II Destroy Ashkelon in Kislev 604 B.C.E.?

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Introduction

The significance of the discovery of a destruction layer at Ashkelon, identified with the Babylonian assault in Kislev, 604 B.C.E., can hardly be overestimated.¹ Beyond the obvious value of this find, which provides evidence for the policies of the Babylonian regime in the “Hatti-land,” it supplies a reliable chronological anchor for the typological sequencing and dating of groups of local and imported pottery (Stager 1996a; 1996b; Waldbaum and Magness 1997; Waldbaum 2002a; 2002b).

My main intention in this article is to explore the reasons behind the Babylonian destruction of Ashkelon. One may ask: why among “all the kings of Hatti” who willingly or unwillingly submitted to the Babylonian yoke already in the first regnal year of Nebuchadnezzar II did only Aga the king of Ashkelon apparently miscalculate, for which he was severely punished? But is it really the king of Ashkelon and his unwise policies that triggered the Babylonian destruction of the city, or should we seek an alternative explanation?

Author's note: It is a great pleasure to contribute this paper to the *Festschrift* in honor of David Ussishkin, whose scholarship has shaped the current state of affairs in the field of Biblical Archaeology and will doubtlessly remain a source of inspiration for many generations of scholars to come.

1. In the *editio princeps* of the Babylonian chronicle (BM 21946, lines 18–20), Wiseman holds that although the first two signs of the toponym in question are doubtful, being written over an erasure, the most plausible restoration would be ^{un}[iš-qi-'i-il-lu-nu] (Wiseman 1956: 85), quite similar to the spelling of Ashkelon in Weidner's tablets (iš-qil-lu-na-a, cf. Weidner 1939: 928). Later, however, influenced by Grayson's skepticism (^{un}x-x-(x)-il-lu-nu: nothing can be read with certainty" Grayson 1975: 100; and see also 1980: 161), Wiseman arrived at the conclusion that this reading remains uncertain (Wiseman 1991: 23, n. 158). Following Stager's request at the beginning of the Ashkelon excavations, the chronicle was collated once again by Finkel. According to Finkel: “the first syllable i^š is quite clear; the second is probably qi; the third is almost certainly an erasure in which the scribe possibly wrote and then erased *aleph*; and the last three syllables -il-lu-nu have never been in doubt” (Finkel *apud* Stager 1996a: 72*, n. 1). It seems that the identification of Ashkelon in the Chronicle has been assured. Recently, however, concerns have been raised as to the credibility of Finkel's restoration. According to James, for instance, “there is no guarantee that this is the correct reading, and thus no clear evidence that the Babylonians campaigned in Philistia in 604 B.C.E. To hang the entire chronology of late Iron Age Philistia on a debated restoration seems perilous, to say the least” (James 2006: 91; and see James 2005: 14; cf. also Hutchinson 2001: 187; Reimer 2004: 209). Due to the great importance of the matter, Ran Zadok kindly agreed to collate the chronicle once again at my request. According to Zadok (personal communication), one should accept Finkel's reading and the identification with Ashkelon, although in Zadok's opinion, the second syllable should be read as qi₂ rather than qi.

According to the commonly held view, the case is straightforward: Ashkelon's king sought actively to resist Nebuchadnezzar's advance in 604 B.C.E., revolting, although in stark isolation, against a newly emerged supranational power (see, e.g., Kitchen 1973: 67; Weippert 1987: 101; Betlyon 2003: 265). According to the excavator, "it was probably the pro-Egyptian policies of the Philistines of Ashkelon (and Ekron),² which led to their demise in the winter of 604 B.C.E." (Stager 2008: 1584). Lipschits suggested that "none of the local kings dared stand up to Nebuchadnezzar, except for the king of Ashkelon. The proximity of Ashkelon to the Egyptian border and the long years of Egyptian rule were apparently the factors that led the king of this small kingdom to continue to rely on Egyptian assistance. Not understanding the change that had taken place in the international balance of power, he refused to capitulate to Babylon. The Babylonian response was decisive, and the fate of that city served as an example to the other kingdoms of the region" (Lipschits 2005: 40; see also Lipschits 2006: 22).³ Albertz (2003: 53) suggested that Nebuchadnezzar's ascendancy in the region was reinforced by the occasional conquests of cities "that were threatening to become Egyptian outposts, such as Ashkelon in 604." In what follows, I will argue that the main reason for Ashkelon's destruction in 604 B.C.E. derives from the probability that a major Egyptian outpost with a garrison was already installed at Ashkelon on the eve of the Babylonian destruction.

In fact, there is more at stake here than finding a possible reason for the Babylonian destruction of Ashkelon. Questions related to this destruction bear on broader problems: the presumed status of Ashkelon as an important Mediterranean port and the hub of the local economic system in the 7th century B.C.E.; questions related to Greek trade with the southern Levant during the period of Egyptian domination in the late 7th century B.C.E.; the interpretation of the East Greek ceramic assemblages from the same period, discovered at a number of sites along the Palestinian coast; and the enrollment of Greek mercenaries in the Near Eastern armies of the time.

2. The archaeologically attested destruction of Ekron, although not mentioned in the surviving parts of the Babylonian Chronicle, was attributed to one of the Babylonian punitive campaigns which took place some time between 604 and 598/597 B.C.E. (for 604 B.C.E. date, see Na'aman 1992; Gitin 1998: 276, n. 2; Fantalkin 2001: 132; for 602/601 B.C.E. date, see Lipiński 2006: 160; for a date post-601/600 B.C.E., see Na'aman 1992; for 598/597 B.C.E. date, see Lipschits 2005: 52, n. 55).

3. Another line of reasoning was offered long ago by Tadmor: with the sudden fall of Nineveh, "Philistia seemed to have experienced a resurgence of nationalism with other nations previously subjugated to Assyria. It was this self-assertion which led Gaza to defy Egypt (Jeremiah 50:1), and Ashkelon to refuse to pay homage to Nebuchadnezzar, the victor of the battle of Carchemish" (Tadmor 1966: 102). This view is outdated, for it is obvious from the present state of research that, despite certain disorder after the Assyrian withdrawal from *Ebir nāri* in the twenties of the 7th century B.C.E., the region did not experience significant change due to immediate Egyptian intervention, and the time span between the end of Assyrian domination and the beginning of the Babylonian invasions shows a high degree of continuity under Egyptian hegemony (Na'aman 1991a: 33–41; Fantalkin 2001: 146–47). Likewise, the conquest of Gaza by Necho II, most probably in 601/600 B.C.E. (Katzenstein 1983), with its aim to regain control over local vassals, should not be compared to the destruction of Ashkelon by Nebuchadnezzar II in 604 B.C.E. Needless to say, in both cases the reasons for the destructions have nothing to do with a resurgence of the Philistine nationalism.

*Reassessing the Significance of the 7th Century B.C.E.
Remains Discovered at Ashkelon*

According to the excavators, Ashkelon was an exceptionally wealthy city in the 7th century B.C.E. (Stager 1996a; 1996b; 2008; Master 2001; 2003), and some scholars have suggested that the port of Ashkelon was at the heart of the local economic system (including Judah) during the days of the *pax Assyriaca* in the Levant (Faust and Weiss 2005; Tappy 2008: 395).⁴ In view of the modest size of the Kingdom of Ashkelon in the 7th century B.C.E. (Na'aman 2009), combined with the lack of developed rural hinterland around the city (Shavit 2008), its presumed prosperity and strength is explained by its favorable coastal location. In other words, Ashkelon's dominant role in local and international commercial activity through the centuries derived from its "port power" (Stager 2001). Had this been the case, one could infer that the aim of the Babylonian destruction of Ashkelon was not just to punish a disobedient city but also to obtain rich booty.

Based on Quinn's (1961) suggestion that the mention of Ashkelon and Babylon in a fragment of Alcaeus (Lobel-Page Fr. 48) should be linked to the well-known reference in another fragment of Alcaeus to his brother Antimenidas serving as a mercenary in the Babylonian army (Lobel-Page Fr. 350), many scholars concluded that Antimenidas participated personally in the destruction of Ashkelon (cf., e.g., Brown 2000: 189; Waldbaum 2002b: 138, n. 4; Finkelstein 2002: 146, n. 26; Raaf-laub 2004: 208; Lipiński 2006: 159). Thus, according to Braun, "it was to join in the destruction of Ascalon that Antimenidas crossed the sea, and here that he won glory by killing and capturing the enemies of Babylon" (1982: 22). According to this scenario, Antimenidas and his peers are considered freelancers for hire who joined the operation against Ashkelon in hope of receiving rich booty, not unlike the famous Ottoman *akinçi* raiders of much later period, whose subsistence depended on plunder (cf. Shaw 1977: 129; Murphey 1999: 35). Leaving aside the credibility of this scenario for a moment (see *addendum*), we shall concentrate instead on the notion of Ashkelon as an extremely wealthy city prior to the Babylonian destruction.

The late 7th century B.C.E. archaeological remains unearthed at Ashkelon have been presented on many occasions (Stager 1996a; 1996b; 2008; Master 2001; 2003; Waldbaum 2002a; 2002b; Weiss and Kislev 2004; Stager et al. 2008) and should not be revisited here in detail. In brief, evidence of destruction was uncovered in two main locations: the winery and the storage building in Grid 38 (Phase 14) and the marketplace in Grid 50 (Phase 7; Stager et al. 2008: 279–83; 309–12). The architectural style of the winery and its location in the center of the city, suggests that this was a royal installation, under the supervision of King Aga (Stager 2008: 1585). The winery, with its deep foundation, largely effaced earlier remains in this area, which yielded just a few poorly preserved silos (Phase 15). The Phase 14 winery building had two sub-phases, both yielding very similar local ceramic assemblages. However, the abundant East Greek wares were present only in the later sub-phase

4. According to Stager (2001: 635), "port power played a dominant role in the configuration of settlement patterns and economic networks from the lowlands to the uplands of Canaan."

(destroyed by the Babylonians) and were absent from both the floors of the earlier sub-phase and the fill layers between the two sub-phases. Among the wide variety of objects sealed by the Babylonian destruction, of particular importance are Egyptian cult items found in one of the rooms of the winery. A bronze statuette of the god Osiris and a faience statuette of Bes lay near a cache of seven bronze *situlae*, decorated with scenes of processions of deities, and in the midst of this cache a decorated bronze votive offering table was found. These finds led the excavators to conclude that a hoard of 25 bronze statuettes of Egyptian deities as well as 14 additional Egyptian bronze artifacts (including cube-shaped weights) found during Iliffe's small-scale sounding at Ashkelon and dated by him to the 4th century B.C.E. (Iliffe 1935), should in fact be re-dated to the late 7th century B.C.E. This reasonable assumption seems to be accepted by other scholars (Uehlinger 1997: 129).

The marketplace, located by the sea, was excavated in an area of over 500 sq. m. It was built on top of the filled quarry (Phase 8 in Grid 50). Both projects, the filling of the quarry and the construction of the marketplace, were undertaken in the late 7th century B.C.E. during a single operation; in other words, the quarry was filled in order to construct a marketplace. This conclusion is further confirmed by the typological and chronological analysis of the pottery assemblage within the fill, mainly the East Greek pottery, which is similar to the assemblage discovered in the marketplace's debris, sealed by the Babylonian destruction. In a few cases joins were even found between pieces found in the fill and pieces found in the destruction debris. It is therefore clear that "the fills were deposited, the buildings constructed, used briefly, and destroyed completely within the space of a very few years" (Waldbaum 2002a: 60). Or, as Master (2001: 209) puts it, "the seventh century market at Ashkelon probably lasted no more than ten or eleven years, from 615–604."

The excavated portion of the marketplace yielded a number of buildings separated by drained streets and a plaza. A row of shops flanked one of the streets in the northeastern corner of the excavated area. Based on the finds, one of the shops (Room 423) was identified as a wine shop, while another (Room 431) as a meat shop (an addition, Room 422, contained a number of bird bones). Bordering the plaza, a series of long narrow rooms was excavated and identified as a warehouse, where goods were stored before being put on sale in the shop. South of the warehouse, an administrative unit was unearthed, labeled by the excavators the Counting House. Here, a dozen scale weights of bronze and stone as well as part of the bronze arm and pans from a scale balance for measuring *Hacksilber* were discovered (Stager 2008: 1585). A number of additional finds unearthed in this area deserve special mention, such as a number of ostraca (Cross 2008) and a few piles of charred wheat, some of which, according to botanical analysis, came from Judah and the Sharon Plain (Weiss and Kislev 2004).

In addition to the winery and marketplace, Stager notes that

the Philistine fortifications, built sometime around 1000 B.C.E.,⁵ still protected Ashkelon when the Babylonian army approached the seaport four centuries later. On the north

5. According to Finkelstein, the Philistine fortification system in Ashkelon was not erected before the 8th century B.C.E. (Finkelstein 2007: 520). For similar down-dating of Ekron's fortification system, see Ussishkin 2005.

slope a thick mantle of sand, soil, and other debris was added to the earlier Bronze Age slope, the crest of which was capped with a series of mud-brick towers connected by a curtain wall. The two towers excavated were 8.00 by 10.50 m and spaced 20 m apart. Presumably this series of towers continued around the rest of the fortification line. If so, then as many as 50 towers fortified the seaport on its land side, just as 53 towers protected the city—along the same line—in the medieval period. This massive fortification system was destroyed in the battle of 604 and not rebuilt until the Hellenistic era. (Stager 2008: 1584)

From the archaeological data described above, one may infer that the 7th century B.C.E. remains discovered in Ashkelon belong almost entirely to a very limited period between 620/615 and 604 B.C.E. Remains from the better part of the 7th century B.C.E., such as the earlier sub-phase of the winery, are extremely scant. This is in sharp contrast to the city of Ekron, where substantial remains from both the first and the second parts of the 7th century B.C.E. were unearthed (Gitin 2003). According to Stager's estimation, however, during the heyday of the city of Ashkelon, some 12,000–15,000 people or more lived there. Stager suggested that the same number of people lived within Ashkelon's ramparts during the Middle Bronze I (Middle Bronze IIA; Stager 2008: 1578; 2001: 634) and the 7th century B.C.E. (Stager 2008: 1585). Such estimates clearly take into account the presumably fortified area of Ashkelon *in toto*. Using the same method, Hakim arrived at some 15,000 inhabitants at Ashkelon for the 6th century C.E. (Hakim 2001: 5, n. 14).⁶ If all these estimates are correct, one is forced to conclude that, during different periods in the city's history, the population remained basically the same, around 15,000 inhabitants.

Based on his regional survey, Shavit arrived at only some 2,000 inhabitants living in Ashkelon during the 10th–9th centuries B.C.E., with almost no rural hinterland around the city (two villages only). He estimated that during this period, the populated area of the city consisted of 10 ha only and covered mainly the top of the mound. For the 8th century B.C.E., Shavit estimated the same 2,000 inhabitants for Ashkelon, although according to his survey, 11 new villages were founded in the vicinity of the city, with an overall estimated population of ca. 1,000 inhabitants. Shavit noted that that in the 7th century B.C.E. there was no substantial change in the number of the settlements surrounding Ashkelon, although the settlement complex for this period seems more consolidated than in the previous period. He estimated the population in the vicinity of the city during the 7th century B.C.E. at ca. 1,500, noting that the population of the city itself was still higher (Shavit 2008: 150–51).

6. Hakim arrives at this number by calculating an estimated area of 57 ha (140 acres) for the city of Ashkelon within its walls, with a gross density of approximately 270 persons per ha (107 persons per acre). It seems, however, that Hakim uses a far-too-high-density coefficient per ha (cf. e.g., Finkelstein 1992; Vink 1997: 121–22). On the other hand, in his opinion, if most of the housing stock in Byzantine Ashkelon was in two-story structures, "then the estimate would yield a net density of approximately eight persons per two-story house, which is not unreasonable for walled cities during that period. It is also possible to assume a density of sixteen persons per four-story structure" (Hakim 2001: 23, n. 14). Given the prescriptions of Julian of Ascalon's famous treaties for buildings three or four stories high, one may reasonably assume that many such buildings comprised the housing stock of Ashkelon during the Byzantine period (Hakim 2001; 2008). For Early Islamic Ashkelon, see Hoffman 2004.

How can we reconcile all of these contradictory population estimates for the city of Ashkelon during the 7th century B.C.E? The answer is simple: we cannot. The archaeological evidence for 8th–7th centuries B.C.E. Ashkelon is limited and inconclusive and we lack a number of crucial variables required for any attempt to estimate the population of the city during this period (such as the size of residential areas versus nonresidential areas within the city walls, the expected population density based on median number of households per hectare, etc.).⁷ Nevertheless, the answer probably lies between Shavit's and Stager's estimates. Still, as Na'aman pointed out on several occasions, even a kingdom with a relatively small territory (such as Gaza or Ashkelon) could have enjoyed enormous prosperity if it took advantage of other factors, such as location, maritime and land routes, and means of transportation, capital, and internal organization which would allow hiring external manpower for work, etc. (Na'aman 1997; 2004; 2009).⁸

This observation is certainly correct, and I have no doubt in the validity of Stager's "port power" model concerning many periods in Ashkelon's history. Suffice it to mention Ashkelon's prominent role during the Middle Bronze I, attested both historically and archaeologically, or during the Amarna period, attested mainly historically (not to mention the periods of prosperity during the Roman or Byzantine periods). In the beginning of the Philistine phase in the history of the city, with a hinterland almost empty of rural settlements,⁹ Ashkelon was forced to initiate trade (especially wheat trade) with more distant localities. Thus, it is quite plausible that during the Iron Age I, Ashkelon extended its power (colonized?), or at least significantly tightened its trade connection with the central part of the Israeli coastal plain (Gadot 2008).¹⁰ The appearance of an Ashkelonite enclave in the area of Jaffa in 701 B.C.E. may be the product of a colonization process that started 400 years earlier (Na'aman 1981: 180; Gadot 2006: 31).¹¹

7. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the reliability of methods for estimating population size based on archaeological data. One thing is clear, however: conducting such an endeavor for a site that lacks the basic evidence required to estimate its ancient population will increase the margin of error many times over. For a variety of problems involved in estimating ancient populations, see, e.g., Fekri 1981; Bairoch 1988; Finkelstein 1992; Postgate 1994; Vink 1997; Lipschits 2003; Osborne 2004; Witcher 2005; Faust 2007; Scheidel 2008.

8. Such an observation is particularly appropriate for Gaza, located at the terminus of the Arabian trade route (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001).

9. Finkelstein 1996; 2000. For the most recent treatment of this topic, see Shavit 2008, according to whom the absence of developed hinterlands around the Philistine city-states may be explained by Aegean concepts of urban settlement, imported by Philistine migrants in the 12th century B.C.E.

10. Two individuals from Ashkelon are attested in Ugarit during the final phase of the Late Bronze Age (RS 19.42; RS 19.91) and it is possible that we are dealing with merchants from Ashkelon doing business in Ugarit (Vidal 2006).

11. According to Na'aman's more recent reconstruction, the appearance of the Ashkelonite enclave east of Jaffa in the time of Sennacherib's campaign to Palestine (during the days of Šidqa, king of Ashkelon), is the product of Tiglath-pileser III's policy, who perhaps transferred Jaffa and the surrounding towns to Rukibtu, king of Ashkelon, in 732 B.C.E. (Na'aman 1998: 219–23; 2009: 352). It should be noted that such a scenario, although entirely plausible, is based on a hypothetical restoration of lines 12–13 in Ann. 18 (Tadmor 2004: 220–21; and see Wazana 2003).

Naʾaman has recently offered a comprehensive summary concerning the mention of Ashkelon in the Neo-Assyrian sources (Naʾaman 2009). According to Naʾaman, the documentary sources indeed point to Ashkelon's prosperity during the 7th century B.C.E., that is to say, Ashkelon, despite its limited territory, "became one of the most important cities in Palestine in the first half of the first millennium B.C.E." (Naʾaman 2009: 356).

As we have seen, however, archaeological evidence for Ashkelon's prosperity during the period of Neo-Assyrian domination is not yet attested. Likewise, Ashkelon's enclave, consisting of Beth Dagon, Jaffa, Bene-Baraq, and Azor, was targeted and most probably confiscated in 701 B.C.E. The loss of the Ashkelonite possessions in the area of the Yarkon may have been a significant blow to the city's abilities to sustain its population, not to mention the likely loss of status in the eyes of its neighbors.¹²

Although the evidence concerning tribute-related correspondence between the Assyrians and their vassals is admittedly sparse, it seems that Ashkelon did not feature prominently in this correspondence, and, when documented (Naʾaman 2009), its contributions are rather modest compared to other localities in the Southern Levant (cf. Elat 1978; Holladay 2006).

There is little doubt that during the period of Neo-Assyrian domination, Ashkelon was an important city, serving Phoenician trade and mediating in supplying Egyptian goods to the Assyrians for the benefit of all parties involved. However, to single out Ashkelon as the trading hub of the southern Levant¹³ does little justice to other Palestinian-coast port powers, such as Gaza, Dor, or Acco. Although Yavneh-Yam was most probably not an independent city during the 7th century B.C.E., its excellent harbor should also be taken into consideration. As Malkin, based on Braudel's concept of *réseau*, puts it: "a port city may be studied as such, but its very existence implies another port city somewhere else" (Malkin 2009: 390).

Based on the tribute-related correspondence and on the meager archaeological remains from the better part of the 7th century B.C.E. discovered so far at Ashkelon, one concludes that Ashkelon's enormous prosperity during the period of Neo-Assyrian domination is probably exaggerated. The archaeological remains attesting to Ashkelon's prosperity come solely from the level that should be dated to the late 7th century B.C.E., that is to say from the period of Egyptian domination at the site.

Greek Pottery from Ashkelon's 604 B.C.E. Destruction Layer: Its Chronology and Interpretation

The discovery of relatively large amounts of Greek pottery in the 604 B.C.E. destruction layer has created the impression of flourishing maritime trade, which is

12. It is possible, however, that Ashkelon received its share of Hezekiah's confiscated lands in the Shephelah in 694/693 B.C.E., together with Ashdod, Ekron, and Gaza (Bull inscription IV, lines 29–30; cf. however, a contradicting statement in the Rassam cylinder, line 53).

13. Thus, according to Tappy (2008: 395), during the period of Neo-Assyrian domination, much of the economic richness of Southern Canaan funneled out to the trading hub at Ashkelon, via Libnah. Likewise, Faust and Weiss (2005) postulated that during the 7th century B.C.E. Ashkelon had a huge Mediterranean port, which was the hub of the local economic system.

then projected to the whole 7th century B.C.E. (e.g., Stager 1996; 2008: 1585; Master 2001; Faust and Weiss 2005). The assemblage includes some 1553 pieces of mainly East Greek origin, with a dozen Early Corinthian sherds (plus an additional fragment of a possible Transitional Corinthian style); it accounts for only about 1% of Ashkelon's late 7th century B.C.E. ceramic assemblage (Master 2001; 2003: Fig. 3).¹⁴

Following a revised terminology and periodization for East Greek pottery proposed by Kerschner and Schlotzhauer (2005), Waldbaum concluded that the East Greek assemblage from Ashkelon belongs to the South Ionian Archaic Ic (SiA Ic)—South Ionian Archaic Id (SiA Id) horizons (Waldbaum 2007). In Kerschner and Schlotzhauer's scheme (2005: 8), the SiA Ic lasted roughly between 630/625 and 610 B.C.E., while the SiA Id, lasted between ca. 610 and 580 B.C.E., corresponding to the later part of Cook's Middle Wild Goat II and to what he reluctantly labeled as Middle Wild Goat III (Cook 1992). In my opinion, however, the majority of Ashkelon's published East Greek decorated pottery belongs stylistically to the SiA Id rather than to the SiA Ic, with some possible advanced examples of the latter (Fantalkin 2008: 237–47; and see also Kerschner and Schlotzhauer 2005: 35, nos. 84).¹⁵ Such a view is corroborated by the presence of a dozen of what seem to be Early Corinthian sherds in the Ashkelon assemblage and only one fragment of a possible Transitional Corinthian style (Waldbaum 2002a: Fig. 13). Nowadays, in slight contrast to Payne's (1931) original scheme, in which the Early Corinthian (EC) style was dated between 625 and 600 B.C.E., it is preferable to follow Amyx's (1988: 428) and Morris's (1996) corrected dates, which put the EC phase between ca. 620/615 and 595/590 B.C.E. or between ca. 610 and 590 B.C.E. respectively. Likewise, in Amyx's corrected Corinthian chronology, the Transitional style is dated between ca. 630 and 620/615 B.C.E. It seems that a date around 615/610 B.C.E. for the beginning of EC best fits what we currently know about the development of this style, which, ostensibly, corresponds to the transition between SiA Ic and SiA Id. It is thus clear that, from a chronological point of view, the whole imported Greek assemblage from Ashkelon, belongs to a very narrow period, between ca. 620/615 and 604 B.C.E. This time span perfectly accommodates the duration of the Egyptian

14. According to Master's petrographic analyses, the vast majority of the pottery, some 77%, found in 7th century B.C.E. Ashkelon was manufactured locally; 13% points to the Shephelah as a place of origin; 3% to Negev; 5% to Phoenicia; around 1% to Cyprus and North Syria; and less than 1% came from Egypt. The East Greek pottery belongs chiefly to the south Ionian milieu (with a center at Miletus), but other localities, such as the East Greek islands (mainly for amphorae) and northern Ionia, are also prominent (Waldbaum 2002a; 2002b). The main forms include Ionian cups, better termed *Knickrandschalen* (cups with everted rims, after Schlotzhauer 2000), oinochoai, cooking-pots, and amphorae, while additional forms include a small number of Bird and Rosette bowls, kantharoi, stemmed dishes, flat-based jugs, kraters, mortaria, and hydriae (Waldbaum 2002a: 58, Table I).

15. In many cases, given the dimensions of the sherds preserved, it is very difficult to classify them precisely rather than attributing them generally to the SiA Ic–SiA Id range (Michael Kerschner, personal communication). Still, Udo Schlotzhauer (personal communication) shares with me the opinion that the majority of Ashkelon's published East Greek assemblage, as well as contemporaneous assemblages from Meẓad Hashavyahu and some additional sites (for the list, see Fantalkin 2008: 237–75), belong mainly to the SiA Id, with some possible examples of late SiA Ic. In this regard, it is worth pointing out that a piece of a Wild Goat oinochoe from Ekron, recently published by Waldbaum (2007) and attributed by her to the SiA Ic, probably belongs to SiA Id (Kerschner and Schlotzhauer, personal communication).

interlude following the Assyrian withdrawal from *Ebir nāri* in the twenties of the 7th century B.C.E. (Naʾaman 1991a: 33–41).

The sudden appearance of East Greek pottery (including coarse ware, such as cooking-pots) on the coastal plain of Israel toward the end of the 7th century B.C., with the main spots at Ashkelon and the fortresses of Meḏad Ḥashavyahu and Kabri, and its subsequent disappearance after only a few years is best explained as representing Greek mercenaries in the employ of the Egyptians.¹⁶ As has been demonstrated on several occasions, local kingdoms were obliged to provide supplies to Greek mercenary units and to cooperate with these Egyptian representatives in every possible way (Naʾaman 1991a; 2006; Fantalkin 2001; 2006; Finkelstein 2002). The rationale behind the establishing of the fortresses at Meḏad Ḥashavyahu and Kabri, manned by Greek mercenaries, is logistical. These fortresses, and most probably additional hitherto undetected fortresses and administrative centers (such as Tell Keisan?), served as focal points for collecting supplies for the Egyptian troops on their way to the Lebanese coast and northern Syria and on their way back to Egypt. Control of Yavneh-Yam's harbor, for example, would have been invaluable from the point of view of Egyptian rulers, as it provides the only natural harbour between Tel Ridan south of Gaza and Jaffa (Galili and Sharvit 1991; 2005: 312), and this is the main reason for the establishment of Meḏad Ḥashavyahu in the vicinity of Yavneh-Yam. The king of Judah was apparently obliged to supply the *corvée* labor, at the request of the Egyptian suzerain, for agricultural works in the fields in the vicinity of both sites, similar to the arrangements that existed between Egyptian representatives and local vassals during the Late Bronze Age (Naʾaman 1981; 1991a).¹⁷ The agricultural produce obtained from these activities was intended for the Greek garrison at Meḏad Ḥashavyahu but mainly for the Egyptian navy that transferred the troops along the coast using the maritime route,¹⁸ making necessary stops for refreshment and replenishment at Yavneh-Yam's harbor.

It is in this perspective that we should view the East Greek assemblage discovered at Ashkelon. From both typological and chronological perspectives, the Ashkelon assemblage is quite similar to that discovered at the fortresses of Meḏad Ḥashavyahu and Tel Kabri. Surely, the proportions are different, especially with regard to Meḏad Ḥashavyahu, where East Greek wares account for about 40% of the ceramic assemblage.¹⁹ Also, the Ashkelon assemblage is a bit richer in terms of variety of

16. For a number of perspectives, cf. Naʾaman 1991a; Fantalkin 2001; 2006; Niemeier 2001; Finkelstein 2002. Recently, it has been even suggested that the northern and eastern boundaries of "the Land of Canaan" in Num 34:7–12 are actually a reflection of the Asiatic domain of Necho II (Levin 2006). The attempts to attribute independent employment of Greek mercenaries during the late 7th century B.C.E. to Egyptian vassals, be it the Kingdom of Judah (e.g., Wenning 2001) or the Kingdom of Tyre (Niemeier 2002), should be abandoned (Naʾaman 1991a; Fantalkin 2006: 202–3; Lipiński 2006: 156, n. 349).

17. A presence of an Egyptian garrison has been postulated for Late Bronze Age Ashkelon, based on the presence of Egyptian pottery and meager architectural remains (Martin 2008; 2009).

18. For the importance of naval forces during the days of the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, cf. Lloyd 1972.

19. In terms of absolute statistics, the number of Greek sherds uncovered at Meḏad Ḥashavyahu is higher in comparison to what has been uncovered so far in Ashkelon. However, this is meaningless, since comparisons should be made between the estimated numbers of vessels in each category, and for Ashkelon, this statistic is still missing.

Greek pottery forms. The basic trend, however, is perceivable and shows that the lion's share of these wares belongs to various forms of *Knickrandschalen*, East Greek (probably Milesian) cooking-pots, Samian/Milesian and related amphorae, and late Middle Wilde Goat II (Si Id) oinochoai.

The attested distribution and the nature of East Greek finds in Palestine are certainly insufficient to prove the existence of a developed Greek pottery trade during the period of Egyptian domination and are better considered as representing Greek mercenaries.²⁰ Likewise, there are no indications that coarse Aegean wares, particularly the cooking-pots, enjoyed a special reputation in the Southern Levant (Niemeier 2001: 16). Even if Master's (2001: 168) observation that in terms of thermal properties the Greek cooking-pots of the 7th century B.C.E. were "far superior to cooking pots made from the sands of the Levantine coast" is correct, this fact remained largely unnoticed or simply ignored by local consumers. The basis for scholars' insistence that East Greek cooking-pots found at Ashkelon, Mezad Ḥashavyahu, and Tel Kabri were considered desirable luxury commodities by local consumers (e.g., Waldbaum 2002b; Master 2001: 165–69; Stager 2008: 1585) is therefore not clear. The alternative interpretation, which considers these wares additional evidence for the presence of East Greek mercenaries, is better warranted (e.g., Niemeier 2001; Fantalkin 2001).²¹

Waldbaum pointed out on several occasions, however, that it is difficult to imagine mercenary soldiers, already burdened with their armor, carrying breakable pottery for some sentimental reasons (1994; 1997; 2002a; 2002b; 2007). I find it difficult to accept this notion, especially when one considers the amounts of Greek pottery discovered in the Egyptian fortresses of Daphnae (Petrie 1888; Schlotzhauer and Weber 2005; 2006) or T 21 (Migdol? See Oren 1984), both manned by Greek mercenaries during the days of the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty (Boardman 1980: 133–41; Smoláriková 2002; 2008).²² There can be no doubt that the mobile units of *Kit-tim*, that is, units consisting of Greek mercenaries employed by the Egyptians along the Arad–Beer Sheva Valley route and supplied by the Judahites (Na'aman 1991a: 47–48; 2006), made little use of Greek pottery. For apparent reasons, this breakable commodity was of no value to moving troops.²³ However, once stationed as garrisons, these soldiers obviously used the familiar wares alongside the local ones. The

20. In this regard, it is worth pointing out Osborne's observation concerning the Greek pottery trade patterns, according to which "far from trade being 'down-the-line' it was mostly 'directed', with merchants setting out, whether on the basis of orders or simply on the basis of their knowledge of the market they were serving, with goods that had been selected to meet particular local taste" (Osborne 2007: 90).

21. Needless to say, due to the interaction with the East Greek mercenaries, and out of curiosity, some East Greek cooking-pots and additional related wares may have been used by locals as well (perhaps at Timnah or Yavneh-Yam). Yet, the modest numbers of these pots uncovered in these assemblages do not point to any special reputation of these wares among the local consumers.

22. Besides, it should not be forgotten that many types of the Greek fine ware, in particular those from the end of the 7th century B.C.E., which are often considered by archaeologists working in the Syro-Palestinian *milieu* as luxury commodity, were in daily use in Greek Archaic communities, particularly in the city of Miletus (Senff 2002).

23. Single finds, such as the East Greek oinochoe discovered at Tel Malḥata (Kochavi 1970), only confirm this observation.

East Greek assemblage discovered at Ashkelon, therefore, should not be considered a reflection of an encompassing maritime trade and Ashkelon's enormous wealth during the 7th century B.C.E., but rather as an indication of the presence of the East Greek garrison, on behalf of the Egyptians, located in the city at the very end of this century.²⁴

An additional point that argues in favor of a Greek mercenary garrison in Ashkelon, stationed there on behalf of the Egyptian suzerain, is the restriction imposed on East Greek trade to Naukratis in Egypt (Her. II.179.1).

Archaeologically, the establishment of Naukratis around 615–610 B.C.E. (Cook 1937; Kerschner 2001; Schlotzhauer and Weber 2005; Schlotzhauer and Villing 2006) overlaps with the appearance of East Greek pottery on the Israeli coast (Fantalkin 2006). Starting in 616 B.C.E., and most probably slightly earlier, the entire coastal plain up to Phoenicia should be considered Egyptian domain.²⁵ In these circumstances, it is reasonable to assume that the Egyptians would not have allowed the uncontrolled establishment of East Greek emporia on the Southern Levantine coast, just as they did not allow it in Egypt itself.

Having said this, I do not wish to reject completely the possibility of limited East Greek trade with the coast of Palestine, especially with places like Ashkelon. However, we should consider the possibility that whatever East Greek trade existed during the late 7th century B.C.E., it would have been directed mainly toward the East Greek mercenaries who were stationed in the region (Fantalkin 2006: 207, n. 93). In this case, those East Greek mercenaries were able to receive some familiar goods (wine, oil, pottery),²⁶ otherwise inaccessible in the local environment. Needless to say, Greek traders who brought these goods to places like Ashkelon or Mezad Hashavyahu (via Yavneh-Yam) with the aim and permission from the

24. According to Xanthus, Akiamos, king of Lydia (it is unclear if this should be taken as Ardis of the Heraclid dynasty or not), had a military commander named Askalos, who, during the course of a campaign in Syria, founded the city of Ashkelon (Fr. 23) (Stark 1852: 45–51; van Berg 1972: 97–109). The crucial role played by the Lydians with regard to the thousands of Ionian and Carian mercenaries hired by Psammetichus I is well known already from the Rassam Cylinder, in which Gyges, King of Lydia, is accused by Ashurbanipal of having sent his army to the aid of Psammetichus I (cf. Jer. 46: 9; Her. II.152). If indeed Ashkelon in Philistia is intended in Xanthus's fragment (for a possible confusion with Daskyleion, see Alexander 1913: 46–50; Hanfmann 1958: 87, nos. 49, 51), this is a scrap of information of particular interest, since in this case, it is possible to draw a connection between the mythical founding of Ashkelon, apparently by the Lydian commander according to the folktale, and the fact that mercenaries from Ionia (the region under Lydian control), while serving in the Saite army, constituted the main element in the garrison located at Ashkelon on the eve of the Babylonian destruction of 604 B.C.E.

25. In 616 B.C.E., Psammetichus I and his army came to the aid of Assyrian King Sin-shar-ishkun and fought alongside the Assyrians in the far north, in the vicinity of Qablinu (Wiseman 1956: 63; Spalinger 1978: 49–50). Such an expedition, conducted so far from home, probably indicate that Egyptian rule over coastal Palestine was already established prior to 616 B.C.E. (cf. Miller and Hayes 1986: 388–89). In 612 B.C.E., Psammetichus I's rule extended as far as the Lebanese coast, as attested by various written sources in which tribute brought by the kings of Phoenicia to Egypt is mentioned (Spalinger 1977: 228–29; 1978: 55, n. 27; Na'aman 1991a: 51–52; Lipiński 2006: 156–57; all with additional references).

26. In this regard, one thinks of the possibility that East Greek traders who made their business with the Greek mercenaries located along the Palestinian coast may have supplied courtesans as well, similar to what is attested with regard to the Greek community in Egypt (Her. II.135).

Egyptian authorities to supply the Greek mercenaries stationed there, certainly would not have avoided the possibility of conducting side business with their local counterparts.²⁷ However, the main point is that such a trade should be considered a by-product and would be impossible without the presence of the initial intended receiver, that is to say, the Greek garrisons stationed in Ashkelon or Mezad Hashavyahu.

The underwater survey of Ashkelon's near-shore sea bottom, accompanied by core samples taken from the inland parts of the mound, have shown that during the 7th century B.C.E., the marketplace at Grid 50 was probably situated on an inlet, enclosed from north and south by two topographical hollows open to the sea, both reaching as far as 200 m inland (Raban and Tur-Caspa 2008: 88–89, esp. Fig. 4.31). According to Raban and Tur-Caspa, the topographic hollow to the south of the inlet in Grid 50 is the most likely spot in which to seek the Canaanite and Philistine inner harbor of Ashkelon. It seems to me, however, that one of the most suitable periods for seeking the inner harbor in the southern hollow to the south of Grid 50 would be in the late 7th century B.C.E., during which the quarry was filled and the marketplace in Grid 50 was erected. In this case, the marketplace was located in the immediate vicinity of the inner harbor (at the distance of some 100 meters). Given the location of this particular marketplace,²⁸ one cannot discard the possibility that it was specifically designed for the needs of the Greek mercenary community located in the city prior to the Babylonian assault.

*Further Evidence for the Presence of an Egyptian Garrison
at Ashkelon on the Eve of the Babylonian Destruction*

The same may even hold true concerning the charred wheat that came from Judah and was discovered at the marketplace of Ashkelon (Weiss and Kislev 2004). That during the Iron Age Ashkelon was forced to obtain a lion's share of its wheat through trade, including the establishment of the enclave in the area of Jaffa, has already been outlined above. The pile of charred wheat, therefore, that came from the Sharon Plain (or perhaps from a more northern locality) and was discovered at Ashkelon's market is hardly surprising. It is the Judahite wheat that is of particular interest. Although it can certainly represent normal trade relations between Judah and Ashkelon under the Egyptian umbrella, Faust and Weiss (2005) took this chance evidence further, suggesting that during the Neo-Assyrian period Ashkelon served

27. Thus, Waldbaum (2007: 64–65), who rejects my attribution of the late 7th century B.C.E. Greek pottery found in Palestine to mercenary activity, suggests that a few pieces of Greek pottery found in Ekron and Timnah were purchased by some adventurous Ekronites and Timnahites "on their occasional shopping trips to Ashkelon, the nearest large emporium for imported goods from around the eastern Mediterranean." Although the possibility of Greek mercenary activities in Ekron and Timnah should not be dismissed altogether, Waldbaum's reconstruction is certainly possible. In any case, however, Waldbaum's scenario does not alter my main conclusion that this pottery arrived in the region during the period of Egyptian domination only due to the presence of Greek mercenaries.

28. One may expect that an additional permanent marketplace would have existed near the city gate; and there is also a possibility that a number of seasonal marketplaces were established in the city's vicinity from time to time.

as the main hub of the local economic system, funneling, *inter alia*, Judahite wheat into the wider Mediterranean market. It is certainly true that in a later period Ashkelon served as an important hub for a regional wheat trade.²⁹ However, one could as easily assume that the Judahite wheat represents part of a levy sent by Judah at Egyptian request, for a benefit of the Egyptian East Greek mercenaries stationed in the city, whose responsibilities included, *inter alia*, collecting and protecting supplies for passing Egyptian troops. One thinks in particular of Jaffa, which during the Late Bronze Age served as an Egyptian administrative center with a permanent garrison and also possessed pharaonic royal granaries (*šunuti*; EA 294: 22; Na'aman 1981; Higginbotham 2000: 131; Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 320–25).

Additional important evidence that may point to the presence of an Egyptian garrison stationed at Ashkelon on the eve of the Babylonian destruction of 604 B.C.E. comes from two recently published ostraca, discovered during the excavations of the site. The first one (Ashkelon 3.3) is an inscription incised in Greek script on a thick body sherd of a storage jar. According to Cross, it was discovered in the 604 B.C.E. destruction level. If so, a Greek inscription of such an early date from a site located in Israel is certainly unique.³⁰ It reads: ATATO EMI, that is, “I am Atatos’s” (Cross 2008: 367). The letters show archaic features, further confirmed by the date of the archaeological context. Cross acknowledged that despite certain attempts to find parallels for this name, he was unable to locate any. One should not doubt, however, that we are dealing with a proper Greek name and that, most probably, it belonged to a mercenary.³¹

29. Corroboration for the assumption that Ashkelon may have served as a focal point for wheat exchange, at least on a regional level, may be found in later sources. Thus, in Tosefta Ahilot 18:18 (ed. Zuckerman, p. 617), we hear that Ashkelonians “sell wheat in their basilicas.” More so, in a version of Jerusalem Talmud, namely in Shevi’it 6:I, 36c (see also Yevamot 7:2, 8a), we hear the statement of Rabbi Pinchas son of Ya’ir who said: “we used to go down to the market (*sidki* = סִדְקִי) of Ashkelon and buy wheat and go back to our towns” (Neusner, 5: 205; and see Goodblatt 1994: 268–69; for the discussion concerning the word *sidki* and its possible meaning, which most probably should be taken as a warehouse for grain, see Rosenfeld and Menirav 2005: 45–50).

30. Yadin’s interpretation of the inscription on the bowl from Arad as Greek (Yadin 1974: 30–32) remains highly uncertain. The same holds true for a couple of supposedly Greek letters inscribed on pottery sherds found in the Babylonian destruction layer of Jerusalem (Sass 1990).

31. Due to the special importance of this inscription, I asked for an additional opinion, which was kindly provided by Ephraim Lytle; according to him (personal communication):

Despite affording no obvious etymology, this is an interesting name, in all likelihood properly Greek. There is some disagreement in the scholarship about the names in Ατ- preserved in Ancient Greek. This is owed in part to Zgusta’s discussion (1955: 297–300; §596), which suggests a common origin for a whole range of names in Ατ- as well as Αττ-, a notion properly dismissed by, among others, Robert, who likewise rejects the suggestion that all of the names in Ατ- attested in late Archaic and Classical Greece are of non-Greek origin (1963: 528–30). Hence, while the name Ατῶτης, frequently attested in the Black Sea in the 4th century, is Paphlagonian, there is no reason to follow either Lauffer (1956: 133) in suggesting that the name Ατῶ on the epitaph of an Athenian woman is a shortened form of the Paphlagonian name introduced into Attica by foreign miners, or Wilamowitz-Möllendorff (1937: 262) in arguing that the Argive sculptor Ἀτοτος named in a late archaic dedication from Olympia (*IvO* 631 late 6th/early 5th century B.C.E.) is a Scythian sculptor granted Argive citizenship. Robert would see these names as related instead “to one or another Greek words in ατ-,” adding as a further parallel the Ἀτος named on a 5th-century B.C.E. lead tablet unearthed in the middle of the last century at Selinous (*IGASMG* I² 63.18; Masson, not seeing any obvious etymology, remains non-committal [1990: 143]). Our Atatos would likewise seem to suggest the Greek origin of certain proper names in Ατ-, and indeed here we can offer as

Another ostrakon (Ashkelon 1.14), which is of special interest although originating from a post-destruction context, was likewise attributed by Cross (2008: 348–49) to the years before the 604 B.C.E. destruction of Ashkelon. It bears a Neo-Philistine inscription, inscribed on a broken part of storage jar, and reads: “Belonging to Kanūpî the man-at-ar[ms].” Cross pointed out that, most probably, we are dealing with an Egyptian mercenary,³² noting Stager’s personal communication that “Ashkelon no doubt called on Egypt for military aid in face of Nebuchadrezzar’s host marching on Philistia” (Cross 2008: 348–49, citing the Saqqārah Aramaic Papyrus [KAI 266] as a parallel).

The famous Saqqārah letter of Adon, probably king of Ekron (Porten 1981),³³ to the pharaoh, certainly shows that some Egyptian clients in Palestine requested military assistance from their suzerain in the face of the approaching Babylonian army. In the case of Ashkelon, however, it seems that mercenaries like Atatos and Kanūpî were already stationed in the city prior to the Babylonian assault. Nebuchadrezzar’s march against Ashkelon in Kislev 604 B.C.E. was probably very swift and left no time for the arrival of Egyptian military aid (below). The attested presence of the Egyptian soldier Kanūpî stationed in Ashkelon prior to the destruction as well as a variety of the Egyptian cult artifacts found in the city (above), demonstrate that, although the majority of Ashkelon’s garrison consisted of Greek mercenaries, Egyptian soldiers were prominently present in the late 7th-century B.C.E. Ashkelon, and some of them may have served as the officers in charge of the Greek contingent. That the Greek mercenaries may have received direct orders from the Egyptian commanders, or from Judahite or Philistine officials who were forced to collaborate with the Egyptian authorities, is not surprising. One thinks of Potasimto (Pedi-samtawi), a commander of the foreign mercenaries under Psammetichus II, or of the *śr* of Meṣad Ḥashavyahu, or of the *Kittim*, acting in the midst of Judahite territory. Nowadays, the idea that East Greek garrisons were stationed by the Egyptians in Meṣad Ḥashavyahu and Tel Kabri is accepted by many scholars. From here, one needs to take one additional logical step forward to suggest that not only was a Greek mercenary garrison stationed in Ashkelon on the eve of the Babylonian destruction but also that the presence of this garrison was itself the main reason for the destruction of the city in Kislev 604 B.C.E.

additional evidence a roughly contemporaneous archaic graffito from the Athenian Agora preserving the strikingly similar name Ἀταταίας (Agora 21 F 4, ca. 650–625 B.C.E.). More speculatively, we might note that while names preserved on the Linear B tablets such as *a-ta-o* and *a-to* are frequently resolved as Ἀνταός or Ἀνθος they could as easily be construed as Ἀταός and Ἀτος (*DMic*, s.v. *a-ta-o*, *a-to*). As for the meaning of our Greek Ἀτατος’ name, unfortunately I cannot see that much can be said. Although it is tempting, given the possible mercenary context of this sherd, to see some kind of pun on a word like ἄτος/ἄτος, *insatiable*, used in Homer especially of “Ares insatiable in war” (*Iliad* 5.388: Ἄρης ἄτος πολέμοιο), as an etymology this strikes me as linguistically improbable.

32. The name is found several times in the Elephantine papyri (Kornfeld 1978: 82). Likewise, we are told by Plutarch that Eudoxus, a famous astronomer and mathematician from Cnidus from the first half of 4th century B.C.E., was instructed by a priest of Memphis, whose name was Chonuphis (*Moralia* 354E). For additional instances of the use of the Egyptian name Chonuphis in the Classical sources, see Parthey 1864: 32, s.v. Chonuphis.

33. For additional options concerning the identification of Adon’s kingdom, see further references in Katzenstein 1983; Lipschits 2005: 42, n. 19.

It seems that on the way to Ashkelon, the Babylonians destroyed the fortress at Tel Kabri, which was manned by Greek soldiers in the service of Egypt. As is evident from its archaeological record, the Greek garrison stationed at Mezad Hashavyahu simply abandoned the fortress in face of the approaching Babylonian army, most probably in order to join the garrison of Ashkelon.³⁴ One may assume that even if Aga, the last acting King of Ashkelon, was willing to submit to the yoke of Babylonia (like the other kings of Hatti), the circumstances—the presence of the Egyptian garrison in the town—made this possibility unlikely.³⁵ The Egyptian garrison, consisting of Greek mercenaries (but not only), a source of pride and power during the Egyptian interlude, has suddenly turned into a burden.

The Rationale behind Nebuchadnezzar's Attack

One may object that contrary to the information on the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C.E., the Babylonian chronicle makes no mention of the Egyptian garrison in Ashkelon:

The first year of Nebuchadnezzar (II): In the first month of Sivan he mustered his army and marched to Hattu. Until the month Kislev he marched about victoriously in Hattu. All the kings of Hattu came into his presence and he received their vast tribute. He marched to Ashkelon and in the month Kislev he captured it, seized its king, plundered [and sac]ked it. He turned the city into a ruin heap. In the month of Shebat he marched away and [returned] to Bab[ylon]. (after Grayson 1975: 100, lines 15–20)

As pointed out by many scholars, however, the Babylonian inscriptional tradition is remarkably different from its Assyrian predecessors (cf. Hoskisson and Boswell 2004). The military activity of the Babylonian kings was not the most important issue in their inscriptions (Van Seters 1997: 60; Vanderhooft 1999: 2223; Eph'al 2003: 178; Wright 2008: 447). Concerning the battle of Carchemish, the chronicle is more specific, stating that the Egyptian army was encamped at Carchemish. Unlike Ashkelon's garrison, however, it is obvious that in Carchemish the Babylonians encountered the major Egyptian expeditionary military force. The significance of this victory for Nebuchadnezzar, who at the time of the battle of Carchemish was still a crown prince, was certainly outstanding. The destruction of Ashkelon, on the other hand, should be seen as Nebuchadnezzar's successful attempt to crash the remaining pockets of Egyptian presence on the Palestinian coast.

34. As I tried to demonstrate elsewhere, the finds at Mezad Hashavyahu fit nicely a pattern known as a "planned abandonment without anticipated return" (Fantalkin 2001: 10–49, 144). In this kind of evacuation there are many logistical difficulties (cf. Stevenson 1982; Thorne 2001: 245–46) and usually, some vessels of particular value are taken away at the time of the abandonment. The spatial analyses of Mezad Hashavyahu finds have shown, for instance, that the East Greek oinochoai were not present in the "de facto refuse," related to the abandonment of the site, but only in the "secondary refuse," which represents the phases of the fort's existence. Most probably, all these vessels were carried away by Mezad Hashavyahu's Greek mercenaries to Ashkelon.

35. Is it possible that the Babylonians took a note of these particular circumstances, sparing the life of Aga's sons? Aga's sons are mentioned in the ration list of Nebuchadnezzar's court, in a tablet dated to 592 B.C.E. (Weidner 1939: Pls. I: Line 4; III: line 6). For comparative perspective concerning forced participations in alliances during the period of Neo-Assyrian domination, see Na'aman 1991b.

At first glance, the decision to attack Ashkelon in the month of Kislev (November/December), that is, at the beginning of the winter season, seems rather reckless. However, after a closer examination it should be considered a wisely calculated move. The choice of season was probably not left to chance, for it was the period when the worst winter storms began (Pryor 1992: 3, *passim*; Gil 2008: 259–64) and, according to Goitein (1967: 316), during the winter season, even for a short voyage from Jaffa or Ashkelon to Egypt, one waited until the “the time of the opening of the sea.”³⁶ It seems that by attacking Ashkelon in Kislev 604 B.C.E., Nebuchadnezzar and his generals virtually eliminated the possibility that the Egyptians would send military aid to Ashkelon’s garrison by sea.

The choice of season for the attack, however, is surely not the sole indicator of the military prowess of Nebuchadnezzar II and his staff. The coastal location of Ashkelon made it of highest strategic importance and leaving the Egyptian garrison, consisting mainly of Greek mercenaries, in the midst of a new Babylonian frontier would have endangered the whole project of occupying the southern part of the country. Ashkelon’s fortifications, already briefly discussed above, were probably quite impressive, and if Stager (2008: 1584) is correct in his assumption that as many as 50 towers fortified the city on its landward side before 604 B.C.E.,³⁷ the Babylonians would have needed significant force to accomplish the destruction.

Although the Greek mercenaries who were stationed at Mezad Hashavyahu probably retreated to Ashkelon from the approaching Babylonian army, this reinforcement was insignificant in the face of the attacking Babylonian war-machine and without any help from Egypt the Ashkelonian garrison was doomed. However, if the Egyptian garrison had been large enough, with a workable system of replenishment of stocks (both of manpower and provisions), the fate of the city might have been different, at least temporarily. Suffice it to mention that Ashkelon, with its Fatimid garrison, stood for more than half a century (between 1099 and 1153 C.E.) as a “thorn in the flesh of the [Crusader] kingdom” (Prawer 1972: 21; and see Hoch 1992; Lev 1991: 103, 126–27). Nebuchadnezzar’s insistence on the utter destruction of Ashkelon already in his first regnal year, due to the presence of an Egyptian garrison there, therefore prevented the possibility of turning the city into a base for Egyptian operations during the period of Babylonian domination in the southern Levant.³⁸

36. Tamuz (2005), however, suggests that while coastal navigation was brought to a standstill in the winter, open-water routes were open for navigation in summer and winter alike. Even so, the potential dangers of winter navigation in both directions, to and from Egypt along the Palestinian coast, including the risk of disembarking in the southern ports of Palestine during winter storms, can hardly be overestimated.

37. For Ashkelon’s fortifications during the crusaders’ period and their design, which followed the master plan created in the earlier periods, see Boas 1999: 43–44, with further references.

38. Interestingly, although Ashkelon was the last to fall into the hands of the Crusaders, another longstanding stronghold was at Tyre, captured by the Crusaders only in 1124 C.E., after five months of siege, which is significantly later than the other coastal cities to the north of Ashkelon associated with the Fatimids. In 1124 C.E., however, the Fatimids were not able to arrange a fleet that would come to the rescue of Tyre and the city was doomed. If one recalls the lengthy Babylonian siege of Tyre, probably between the years 586/585 and 573/2 B.C.E. (Eph’al 2003), the similarities between the fates of both Ashkelon and Tyre through the ages, that is to say their abilities

Conclusions

To conclude, the goal of the present study has been to demonstrate that the best possible explanation for the Babylonian destruction of Ashkelon in Kislev 604 B.C.E. should be sought in the Babylonian desire to eliminate an Egyptian garrison located in the town and consisting mainly of Greek mercenaries. Toward that end, the Babylonians wisely calculated the best possible season for such an operation; all this in order to crush the remaining Egyptian strongholds in Palestine and to prevent Ashkelon with its Egyptian garrison from becoming a thorn in the flesh of the southern frontier of the Babylonian empire. Needless to say, such a severe punitive campaign, undertaken in the first regnal year of Nebuchadnezzar, sent a powerful message to the other kingdoms in the region. Apparently, however, the lesson was not learned, and soon a number of additional kingdoms and their sovereigns would share the fate of Ashkelon under Babylonian rule.

Addendum: Antimenidas at the Walls of Ashkelon?

The notion concerning Antimenidas's enrollment in the Babylonian army (Lobel-Page Fr. 350) has reached us via Stabo (13.2.3), according to whom "Mitylene produced famous men: in olden times Pittacus, one of the Seven Wise Men; and the poet Alcaeus, and his brother Antimenidas, who according to Alcaeus performed a great feat while fighting as ally of the Babylonians and rescued them from trouble by killing a warrior who, he says, was only one palm's breadth short of five royal cubits." Strabo, in quoting what is assumed to be Alcaeus's original poem, refers to Antimenidas as "Βαβυλωνίους συμμαχουντα," i.e., "fighting alongside the Babylonians." The source, however, is not free of difficulties, and there are reasons to believe that Strabo was not necessarily faithful to Alcaeus's original version (Fantalkin 2008: 417–20). More so, even if the source is reliable, we must remember that Alcaeus's lyric poems were basically designed for performance on specific occasions (symposia) and for a specific aristocratic audience, consisting largely of selected members of the Mytilene aristocracy, accompanied by the hetaerae (Rösler 1985; Bowie 1986; Nagy 2004). These sympotic songs are characterized by role playing, in which the "I" of the poet is not necessarily autobiographical and is occasionally to be understood as an assumed identity rather than a faithful representation of his own personality and deeds. In the framework of the genre, the poet is permitted to don a number of poetic masks, while pretending to identify with the fictitious characters who are often merely his own literary creations (Dover 1964; Rösler 1980). Likewise, even if real people are involved, there is no certainty that the descriptions and contexts portray their actual deeds. Individuals and their names may be utilized by the poet to suit the needs of the specific work in which they are mentioned.

to become sources of trouble for any occupying power due to direct access to the sea, is striking (cf. Elat 1978: 34). It seems that Nebuchadnezzar's insistence on Ashkelon's destruction and Tyre's submission is in line with the assumption that these port cities were considered potentially dangerous for the Babylonian goals. But if Nebuchadnezzar would not have destroyed Ashkelon with its Egyptian garrison already in Kislev 604 B.C.E., it had the potential to become "another Tyre" for the Babylonians for years to come.

Thus, many classicists cast doubt upon the historicity of the lyrical poems, i.e., on whether the events described therein actually occurred (cf. Slings 1990; 2000; Owen 2003; Nagy 2004; Edmunds 2007).

The prevailing view holds, however, that Antimenedes was not just a high-ranking mercenary in the Babylonian army but that he also personally participated in Nebuchadrezzar's punitive campaign against Ashkelon in 604 B.C.E. Upon what evidence is this based? Many believe that this is found in Fragment 48 of Alcaeus, which was discovered among the Oxyrhynchus papyri (Lobel-Page Fr. 48). However, all that has been preserved in this papyrus are fragments of sentences in which there is reference to Babylon and Ashkelon in the context of war. In view of the assumption that Alcaeus was active between ca. 620 and 570 B.C.E., it is likely that his poem indeed commemorates the destruction of Ashkelon by the Babylonians in 604 B.C.E. It was Quinn who first proposed that the references to Ashkelon and Babylon in Fragment 48 of Alcaeus should be linked to the known fact that according to Alcaeus's Fragment 350, Antimenidas was a mercenary in the Babylonian army (Quinn 1961). According to Quinn, based upon Fragment 48, one may assume that Antimenidas participated personally in the destruction of Ashkelon. As logical as this assumption might appear, over time it took on a life of its own and was presented by many scholars as a historical "fact"; this despite the fact that in Fragment 48 of Alcaeus, Antimenidas is not mentioned at all.

In fact, due to the nature of the surviving sources, there are numerous ways to interpret Alcaeus's verses concerning Antimenidas's enrollment in the Babylonian army. Thus, the lines on the return of Antimenidas from the far corners of the earth; about the battle with a Goliath-like figure; of saving the Babylonians from disaster: all these may not stem from Alcaeus's desire to glorify his brother's deeds but rather might reflect intentional mockery of Antimenidas's achievements—pure sarcasm for which Alcaeus was so notoriously famous (cf. Gomme 1957: 256–57; Andrisano 2001: 59; Dench 2005: 266). Is it possible that Antimenidas, like the rest of the Greek mercenaries in the East during the Archaic period, served in the Egyptian army³⁹ but fell into Babylonian captivity during the course of one of the battles? And is it possible that some time later, after he returned to Mytilene, his brother Alcaeus received him with a particularly sarcastic poem for the amusement of all those at the feast at which it was presented? Whatever the answer, one thing is clear: all of the historical reconstructions concerning the possible employment of Greek mercenaries in the Babylonian army, based as they are upon Alcaeus's poem, remain uncertain (for detailed discussion, see Fantalkin 2008: 416–25; Fantalkin and Lytle forthcoming).

39. Tandy (2004: 190), for instance, even hypothesized that Antimenidas was first an *epikouros* of the pharaoh in the area of Ashkelon, but following the Egyptian defeat, remained in the area and offered his services to the Babylonian king. According to another view, also quite speculative, it is possible that Alcaeus himself was a mercenary for a certain time in the Egyptian army (Page 1959: 223, n. 2).

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Tall al-Umayri in the Iron Age I
Facts and Fiction
with an Appendix on the History
of the Collared Rim Pithoi

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This article deals with archaeological finds and theories related to the biblical text. David Ussishkin, my teacher in the 1970s, my partner at Megiddo since the beginning of the 1990s, and my friend for many years, has always insisted that the two be separated. He has always maintained that archaeological finds must be studied independently of theories which stem from one's understanding of ancient texts. Needless to say, I fully adhere to this approach. Our only disagreement is about the next step to be taken. David sees the archaeologist as a technician who, upon completion of the archaeological aspects of his work, hands over the results to the historian, to draw the broader picture (Ussishkin 2007). I see myself as a historian who practices archaeology. I therefore do not hesitate to take the next step and deploy the finds for historical reconstruction.

The Excavator's Account:
From Umayri to Reuben

Two decades ago, Frank Moore Cross published an article (1988) suggesting that the tribe of Reuben played a leading role in early Israelite tribal confederacy of the Iron Age I and that in the 10th century B.C.E. the Reubenites moved from Transjordan to the highlands west of the Jordan. A decade later, Larry Herr (1999; Herr and Clark 2001) interpreted the results of the excavations at Tall al-Umayri—a 1.5-ha site south of Amman—in a manner that gave archaeological flesh and bones to Cross's theory.

Tall al-Umayri supplied the most detailed evidence for the Iron I in Transjordan (the description below is based mainly on Herr 1998; 1999; 2006; 2007; Herr and Clark 2001; 2007; Clark 1997; 2000; 2002; most citations are from Herr 1999, but the same assertions appear in most of the works mentioned above). Herr and his team identified three phases of occupation in the 13th and 12th centuries B.C.E. (Herr 1999: 65).

Author's note: A summary article on the finds of Tall al-Umayri was published after this article had been submitted (Herr and Clark 2009). It adheres to all data and interpretations known before and thus does not change the premise of this article.

Phase 14 dates to the Late Bronze II, in the 13th century B.C.E. The settlers reused an earthen rampart that had been built in the Middle Bronze IIC. A large building identified as a palace/temple was unearthed in Area B. It came to an end in a major destruction. The inhabitants of this settlement were identified as the Amorites mentioned in the Bible (Herr and Clark 2007: 125).

Tall al-Umayri was rebuilt in Phase 13 at the end of the Late Bronze (Herr and Clark 2007: 125). Evidence for this settlement was found, according to the excavators, in the new earthen rampart which was laid in the somewhat later Phase 12. The pottery within the Phase 12 rampart included “transitional LB IIB/Iron I pottery” (Herr 1999: 66; also Herr 2000). In other words, since this pottery from the rampart contained a mixture of Late Bronze and Iron I forms, it was given a separate phase, between Phase 14 of the Late Bronze II and Phase 12 of the Iron I. Other pieces of evidence for this phase come from the excavation inside the settlement, which revealed evidence for two construction phases in the buildings of Field A. The excavators proposed to connect the early phase with the ceramic evidence from the rampart. At the same time they admitted that in Area A this phase is not represented by occupational debris with pottery but rather by “a series of thin laminations with no diagnostic pottery” (Herr 1999: 66). They argued that the Phase 13 settlement came to an end in an earthquake which destroyed the defense capabilities of the Middle Bronze rampart and thereby necessitated the construction of a new rampart in the time of Phase 12.

The Tall al-Umayri team stated that the Phase 12 settlement is characterized by the earliest Iron I pottery tradition, though LB IIB features are still present. But the architectural features of this layer were “completely different from those of the LBA, suggesting the presence of new people groups” (Herr and Clark 2007: 125). The Phase 12 settlement was protected by a wall two meters thick, with rooms creating a casemate-like system. It was built on the crest of the ancient Middle Bronze rampart. The latter was renovated by the Phase 12 inhabitants who also cleaned the ancient moat down the slope. The casemate wall was described as “one of the earliest such systems known to date” (Herr 1999: 67). Because the casemates served as the back rooms of houses built on the perimeter of the settlement, it is possible that their alignment was more “an event of chance than planning” (Herr 1999: 67). A gate may have been detected in the southwestern sector of the site (Herr and Clark 2007: 125). Several buildings, including a well-constructed pillared house, were incorporated into the casemate wall, “one of them is the earliest and best preserved example of a type of house that would become ubiquitous in the Iron Age in the southern Levant, the so-called four-room house” (Herr and Clark 2007: 125). Phase 12 came to an end in a heavy conflagration that left a 1.5–2.5 m thick destruction debris, including a large number of vessels *in situ* (the excavators mention 80 pithoi), piles of burned barley, and six bronze weapons and a few “stone ballistic missiles” which indicate that the destruction of the site was caused by a military attack (Herr 1999: 69). The pottery from the destruction layer “is best dated near 1200 B.C.E.” (Herr 1999: 69). The only difference between this assemblage and the one of Phase 13 (from the rampart) is that the cooking-pots in the former do not include as many Late Bronze triangular-rim forms.

After an occupational gap of about a century “during much of the 12th century BCE,” the site was rebuilt. A storage room with 18 pithoi was uncovered above the destruction accumulation of Phase 12; the perimeter wall continued to be in use (Herr and Clark 2007: 125). Herr (2007) has recently published a pottery assemblage from Area H, which he describes as contemporary with this phase. He dated this assemblage to the late Iron I, in the second half of the 11th century B.C.E. This settlement was probably inhabited by “a people group different from that of Strata 13–12” (Herr and Clark 2007: 125).

Herr interpreted the Tall al-Umayri finds as testimony for the beginning of Iron Age settlement activity in the Transjordanian plateau. He compared the results at Tall al-Umayri with several sites in its vicinity, stated that they display a “regional cultural identity” (Herr 1999: 71), and identified them as settlements of the tribe of Reuben (Herr 1999: 72; 1998). Herr concluded that Cross’s proposal, that “Reuben was the earliest tribe to settle down” may be confirmed (Herr 1999: 70–72). He further argued that the Tall al-Umayri pottery is “probably slightly older than the very earliest of the unwalled settlement west of the Jordan” (Herr and Clark 2001: 64)—a testimony that the tribe of Reuben had settled as early as the 13th century B.C.E. and developed a complex society “by about 1200 BCE or slightly earlier.” Herr took two additional steps of interpretation: First, he proposed identifying the Tall al-Umayri and vicinity settlement system with Israel of the Merneptah stele. Second, he argued that the early date of Tall al-Umayri—earlier than sites west of the Jordan—confirms the biblical tradition that the early Israelites entered Cisjordan from east of the Jordan River (Herr 1999: 72–73). Finally, Herr explained that the destruction of the site in the early 12th century was caused by competing proto-Canaanite tribes or by the Midianites, “perhaps in activities of trade expansion similar to the events recorded in the old text of Judges 5” (Herr 1999: 74). In another place, Herr and Clark (2001: 66) raised an alternative theory—that the site was destroyed by Merneptah in 1207 B.C.E. According to Herr, the early date of Tall al-Umayri and the resemblance between the finds of the site and the finds of Phase II at Mount Ebal may confirm Cross’s theory that at a certain point the tribe of Reuben moved from Transjordan to the Shechem area.

The simple question is: Does the archaeology of Tall al-Umayri support these far-reaching interpretations?

What Does Archaeology Say?

Archaeology seems to tell a very different story and does not provide evidence for the Tall al-Umayri team’s historical interpretation. In what follows, I wish to concentrate on the finds from the main Iron I settlement—Phase 12.

The Date of the Phase 12 Settlement

I have recently dealt with the Iron I pottery assemblages west of the Jordan and reached the conclusion that they can be divided into three phases—early, middle, and late Iron I (Finkelstein and Piasezky 2006). The early Iron I is represented in the highlands at the site of Giloh (Mazar 1981) and Stratum III at ‘Izbet Šarṭah (Finkelstein 1986). The middle Iron I is represented by Stratum V at Shiloh (Bunimovitz

and Finkelstein 1993) and by Mount Ebal (Zertal 1986–87). The late Iron I is best represented in the lowlands: by a large group of sites of the Megiddo VIA horizon in the northern valleys (Arie 2006) and by Stratum X at Tell Qasile on the coastal plain (Mazar 1985).¹ The distinction between the different ceramic phases of the Iron I is supported by radiocarbon results (Finkelstein and Piasezky 2006). Such minute ceramic observations and radiocarbon dating do not as yet exist in Transjordan, and therefore it is essential to compare the pottery assemblage from Tall al-Umayri to those retrieved west of the Jordan.

Let me start with two methodological comments.

1. Comparing Iron I assemblages from different regions is notoriously difficult. Sites located in the lowlands or close to the lowlands (e.g., ʿIzbet Šarṭah) yielded assemblages that are more varied and which manifest influences of second millennium B.C.E. traditions, while the repertoire of sites located in the heart of the highlands is limited (see, e.g., the pottery of Giloh). In addition, urban sites produced more elaborate assemblages compared to small rural sites. Also, Iron I assemblages are characterized by regional peculiarities, and this holds true for Tall al-Umayri, as well.

2. In a tell situation, it is advisable to study complete vessels rather than sherds, as the latter may have originated from bricks, fills, etc. So, too, in a destruction accumulation such as the one which characterizes Phase 12 at Tall al-Umayri; sherds may have come from bricks, floor make up, mud placed on the roof, etc. I will therefore concentrate on complete vessels and will pay attention only to the latest sherds in a given location, as they may shed light on the dating of an assemblage.

The pottery from the rampart, labeled as belonging to “Phase 13” (Phase 11B in Clark 2000; 2002), includes Late Bronze and Iron I items (Clark 2000: Fig. 4). Incidentally, some of the items do not seem too early in the Iron I (Clark 2000: items 27–29). It is impossible to know whether this indeed represents pottery from a transition stage between the two periods or simply a mixture of pottery from two different phases: the Late Bronze and Iron I pottery from the days before the construction of the rampart. Moreover, if the Iron Age part of the rampart is composed mainly of settlement refuse (see below), the Iron I pottery, which is difficult to distinguish from that of Phase 12, may represent no more than the life of the settlement of Phase 12.

The assemblage of Phase 12 (described as Phase 11A in Clark 2000; 2002 Phase 11 in Clark 1997) is dominated by collared-rim jars (the “casemates” were used for storage; see picture in Herr and Clark 2001: 42). Past attempts to identify chronological variations in these pithoi (including local variants such as Clark 1997: Figs. 4: 16, 4: 18) have all been proven futile (and see appendix); the collared-rim pithos appears for the first time in the later phases of the Late Bronze Age and continues to appear in all phases of the Iron I (for the late Iron I, see Arie 2006). Therefore, one needs to look at the other types in the Tall al-Umayri assemblage in order to establish the relative date of Phase 12.

1. In the highlands the late Iron I may be represented by the site of el-Ahwat. The pottery of this site has not been published yet, but ¹⁴C determinations (Sharon et al. 2007) put its date close to that of Megiddo VIA (Finkelstein and Piasezky 2007).

Most of the cooking-pots (mainly sherds) are of two types: the everted triangular form in the Late Bronze tradition (e.g., Clark 2000: Fig. 4.32: 3–6) and the erect Iron I type (e.g., Clark 2002: Fig. 4.16: 4–6). What seems to me to be the latest cooking-pot from this phase (Clark 2002: Fig. 4.16: 9) appears in the later phases of the Iron I and even in the Iron IIA (though in the latter period the rim is more slanted); in any event, it does not belong to the early Iron I. This *mélange* is characteristic of the Shiloh V assemblage, which also includes a meaningful group of *complete* everted, triangular cooking-pots in the Late Bronze tradition (Bunimovitz and Finkelstein 1993).

The bowls, jugs, and pyxides from Phase 12 cannot be dated accurately within the Iron I, and the same holds true for most kraters. Yet, one outstanding krater (Clark 2000: Fig. 4.31: 17) has an exact parallel at Megiddo VIA of the late Iron I (Arie 2006: Figs. 13.11; 13.63: 9). Some of the kraters (e.g., Clark 2002: Fig. 4.15) have parallels even later—in late Iron I and early Iron IIA Khirbet ed-Dawwara (e.g., Finkelstein 1990: Fig. 16: 5). One of the Tall al-Umayri storage jars (Clark 1997: Fig. 4.26: 6) has a somewhat parallel item at Megiddo VIA (Finkelstein, Zimhoni, and Kafri 2000: Fig. 11.16: 1; Arie 2006: Fig. 11.16: 1). The large storage jar with three handles (Clark 2002: Fig. 4.14: 10) appears at Megiddo from Stratum VIIA to VIA, that is, until the late Iron I (Finkelstein and Zimhoni 2000: Fig. 10.1: 8; Finkelstein, Zimhoni, and Kafri 2000: Fig. 11.17: 6, respectively).

To sum up this issue, though the assemblage from the destruction layer of Phase 12 has certain types that appear as early as the early Iron I and other types that are known from late Iron I assemblages, it is best to compare it to the middle Iron I assemblage from Stratum V at Shiloh rather than to late Iron I assemblages. This is so for two reasons: (1) Phase 12 is followed by at least one additional Iron I phase (Herr 2007). (2) Important late Iron I forms do not appear here. I refer first and foremost to cooking-pots and cooking-jugs that appear at the sites of the Megiddo VIA horizon (e.g., Arie 2006: Fig. 13.53: 5–9; Fig. 13.59: 7–10; I ignore the painted forms because their absence may be related to the remoteness and isolation of Tall al-Umayri).

The destruction of Shiloh V is radiocarbon dated to 2863 ± 16 or 2873 ± 13 BP, which translates to 1050–1000 or 1050–975 B.C.E., respectively (68% probability) (Finkelstein and Piasezky 2006). It is possible of course that both Shiloh V and Tall al-Umayri 12 were built several decades earlier. Hence, dating the life-span of Tall al-Umayri 12 in the first half of the 11th century (possibly starting in the late 12th century) seems reasonable. The date of ca. 1200 B.C.E. given to the destruction layer of Phase 12 by the Umayri team (Herr 1999: 69; Herr and Clark 2007: 125) is therefore a century and half too early.

The Tall al-Umayri team did not provide evidence for the stratigraphic situation of the structure that yielded the assemblage described by Herr (2007) as late Iron I, and though Herr speaks about “smashed pottery on a beaten-earth surface (Herr 2007: 135), it is not clear whether this is a sherd collection or parts of vessels which have not been restored. In any event, judging from the cooking-pots, this is indeed a late Iron I group.

The Fortification System of Phase 12

The fortification system of the 1.5-ha Iron I settlement at Tall al-Umayri is known from Fields A and B (Fig. 1). It is comprised of an outer line, ca. 2 m thick, a four-room house oriented perpendicularly to the wall with its back broad-room creating a sort of a casemate, and another structure with a second casemate-like space adjacent to it to the south. The inner wall of the “casemates”—which is also the inner wall of the back rooms of the houses—does not make one continuous line, and its width changes from one point to the next. The cross-walls between the “casemates” are continuations of walls of the houses (Herr 2000: 172). Though the excavators describe a Ground Penetrating Radar investigation which revealed two parallel walls in other parts of the mound (Herr 1999: 67), the exact nature of the fortification there has not been verified. In short, it is not clear whether this is a real casemate wall or merely a continuous outer line of broad-rooms of pillared houses that were built on the periphery of the settlement. The houses in Fields A and B were constructed on the crest of a Middle Bronze rampart, which continues to the slope and ends in a rock-cut moat. The Iron I “rampart” is an easy-to-lay repair of the Middle Bronze embankment, and the upper part of it may be comprised of no more than the refuse layers of the settlement that were thrown onto the slope. There is no indication whether this earthen system exists in other parts of the site.

In short, the Tall al-Umayri fortification is neither a full-fledged casemate wall nor a solid fortification of the type known in the Levant in the Iron II. And the rampart is not an original system, of the type known, for instance, from Iron II Beer Sheba and Jezreel (Aharoni 1973; Ussishkin and Woodhead 1994: 10, 46, respectively). No less important, the Tall al-Umayri fortification is not unique, in the sense that it has parallels in several late Iron I and early Iron IIA sites in both Trans- and Cisjordan.

Two or three sites south of Tall al-Umayri, in the territory of later Moab, display a similar layout. Khirbet el-Mudayna el-Aliya (Routledge 2000; Fig. 2) is a 2.2-ha site built on a ridge surrounded on three sides by deep wadis. It has a system of casemate-like walls “to which most of the site’s buildings are directly attached” (Routledge 2000: 48). The houses are of the pillared type and their back broad-rooms create the casemates (Routledge 2000: Figs. 10–13). A moat separated the site from the ridge. The center of the site creates what seems to be a large open space. Only a few sherds from Khirbet el-Mudayna el-Aliya have thus far been published (Routledge 2000: Figs. 5–7). Routledge dated them to the late Iron I. The site was then deserted.

Khirbet Lehun is a ca. 1.4-ha Iron I site located on the northern rim of Wadi Mujib (Homès Fredericq 1997: 56–66; 2000). A set of casemate-like rooms surround the site, with houses integrated with them (Homès Fredericq 2000: 182; Fig. 3); the “casemates” served as the back-rooms of pillared-buildings. The center of the site consists of a large courtyard with buildings at its center. The site was dated by the excavator to the transition from the Late Bronze to the Iron I, probably because a Nineteenth/Twentieth Dynasty scarab was found there (Eggler and Keel 2006: 182–83). The single pottery plate (Homès Fredericq 1997: Fig. 173) dis-

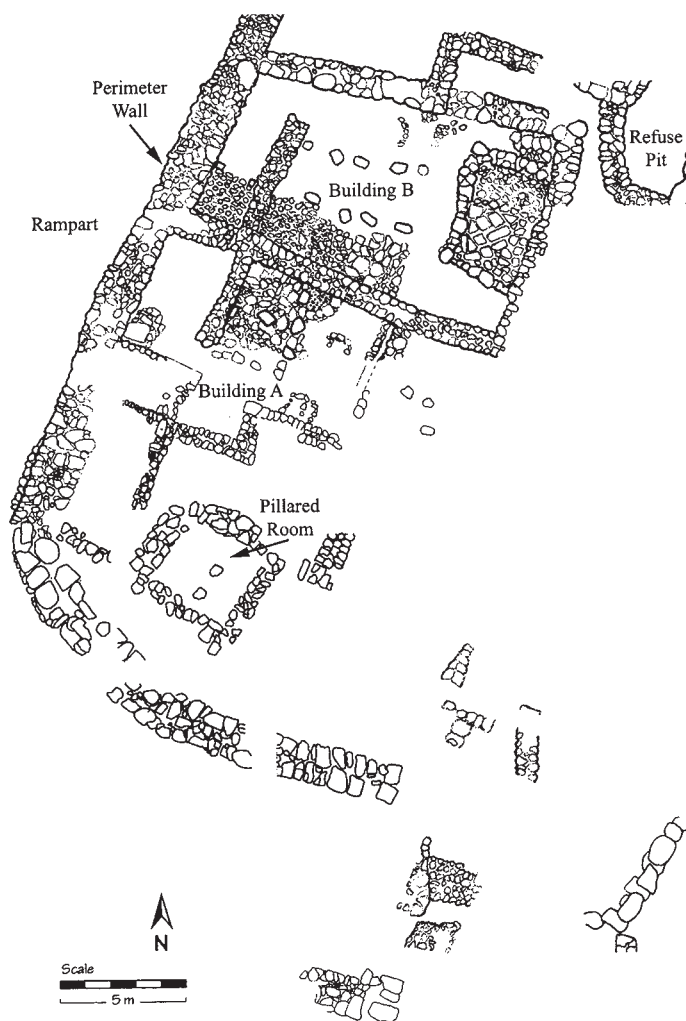


Fig. 1. The fortification system of Phase 12 in Areas A and B at Tall al-Umayri (Herr 2006: 62).

plays late Iron I and Iron II vessels, but there is no indication of the provenance of these items. Since the site had been deserted and then resettled in the later part of the Iron II, it is reasonable to assume that the late Iron I vessels came from the early layer. This means that the site was dated much too early and that it is contemporary to Khirbet el-Mudayna el-Aliya.

Khirbet el-Mudayna el-Mu‘arraja is a ca. 0.7-ha site built in a topography similar to that of Khirbet Mudayna el-Aliya (Olavari 1977–78; 1983). It consists of a row of casemates surrounding an open courtyard. There are several structures in the courtyard. It is not clear whether this site, too, has pillared buildings set perpendicular to the wall on the periphery of the site. The two pottery plates indicate that the site probably dates to the late Iron I.

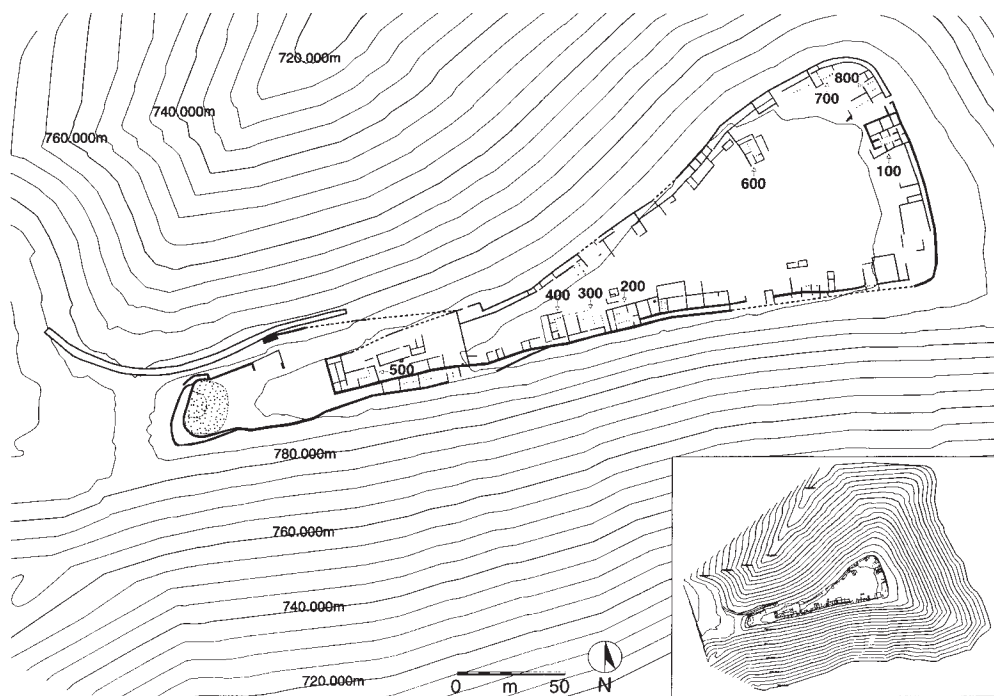


Fig. 2. Plan of Khirbet el-Mudayna el-Aliya (Routledge 2000: 41).

Several sites west of the Jordan also resemble the architectural layout of Tall al-Umayri. Khirbet ed-Dawwara northeast of Jerusalem (Finkelstein 1990; Fig. 4) is a 0.5-ha site surrounded by a solid wall, 2.3–3.1 m thick. Four-room-type pillared houses are adjacent to the wall; in some of them the back broad-rooms create a line of “casemates.” Bedrock is exposed at the center of the site, so it is impossible to determine whether this part, too, was built-up or served as an open courtyard. The site was established in the middle or late Iron I and continued into the early Iron IIA, when it was deserted.

Stratum VII at Tel Beer Sheba (Herzog 1984) seems to have been constructed in a similar way. Though the remains are fragmentary, they seem to comprise a set of pillared houses built perpendicular to the perimeter of the site, with their back broad-rooms creating a set of casemates. In this case, the outer wall, which is ca. 1 m thick, does not form a single line. The buildings surround an open courtyard. Herzog reconstructed a 0.3-ha settlement. Stratum VII dates to the early Iron IIA (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004). Several early Iron IIA sites in the Negev Highlands display a somewhat similar layout. I refer mainly to the sites of Hatira near Dimona (Meshel and Cohen 1980) and Quseima near Kadash Barnea (Meshel 1994).²

2. Khirbet Qeiya is a 2.3-ha site in the western sector of the Valley of Elah. It features a casemate wall and houses adjacent to its inner side (Garfinkel and Ganor 2008). The houses yielded a late Iron I assemblage. The excavator dated the fortification to the time of the houses.



Fig. 3. Plan of Khirbet Lehun (Homès Fredericq 1997: Fig. 41).

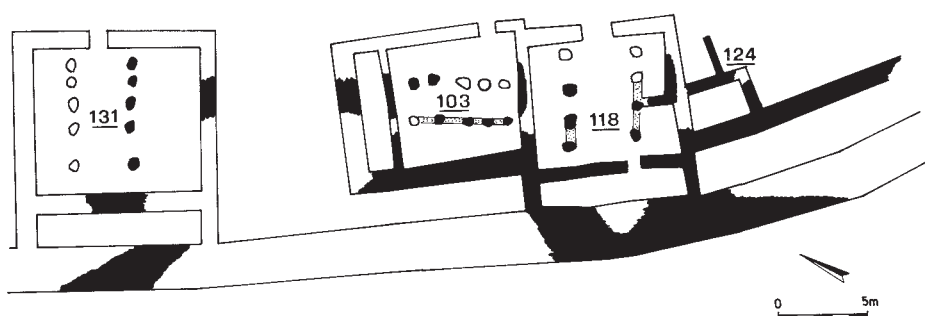


Fig. 4. Plan of Area A at Khirbet ed-Dawwara.

Historical Overview

Formative State Formation

Archaeology, the Bible (first and foremost regarding Omride Israel), and extra-biblical texts (first and foremost the Monolith Inscription on the battle of Qarqar) put the emergence of the full-fledged territorial kingdoms in the southern Levant in the early Iron IIA—in the first half of the 9th century B.C.E. But this phase must have been preceded by an earlier, formative stage, which is more difficult to trace archaeologically. This earlier stage covers the middle-to-late Iron I—the 11th and much of the 10th century B.C.E.

The “check-list” of archaeological manifestations of early state-formation includes the appearance of fortification and monumental architecture, mass production of pottery, industrialization of the agricultural output, evidence of long-distance trade, an early writing system, etc. (for the Levant, see Jamieson-Drake 1991; Finkelstein 1999). Of all these expressions, the most obvious and possibly the only detectable one for the formative phase is the appearance of early forms of fortifications.

Comparable early fortifications appear in different parts of the southern Levant at approximately the same time—in the middle-to-late Iron I (probably between the mid-11th and late 10th centuries B.C.E.)—and should no doubt be seen as a marker of the formative stage of the (somewhat later) territorial kingdom in this region. Tall al-Umayri may represent the earliest step in the development of a proto-Ammonite regional entity, in the middle Iron I. Early administrative organization there is also manifested by the site’s storage facilities and by an exceptionally large number of seals found there (Eggler and Keel 2006: 310–61). Khirbet ed-Dawwara may be connected to the rise of an early Israelite entity north of Jerusalem in the middle-to-late Iron I (Finkelstein 2006).³ The two Khirbet el-Mudayna sites and Khirbet Lehun stand for the early organization of proto-Moab in the late Iron I. Tel Beersheba and the Negev Highlands sites represent the desert polity that developed

3. One could count the middle Iron I storage facility at Shiloh as another characteristic of this early entity, but this site was destroyed long before the abandonment of Khirbet ed-Dawwara.

in the early Iron IIA (Finkelstein 1995: 103–26; possibly already in the very late Iron I—Fantalkin and Finkelstein 2006).

This formative stage of territorial organization, which developed after the collapse of the Egypto-Canaanite system (in the late 12th century B.C.E.) was characterized by instability, which is manifested by the destruction and abandonment of *all* of these sites after a relatively short period of time. Possible confrontations between regional groups may have been one reason behind this development. Tall al-Umayri was destroyed within the middle Iron I, in the 11th century, while the three sites in Moab were abandoned in the late Iron I, in the 10th century. In the more elaborate phase of state formation in these territories, in the 9th century B.C.E., the center of power shifted to other sites: Rabbah in Ammon and Dibon (of Mesha) in Moab. The territorial kingdoms now stabilized and their capitals continued to be inhabited for a long period of time in the Iron II.

History of Tall al-Umayri: Real and Fictitious

There is no way to suggest a date for the destruction of Phase 14 at Tall al-Umayri—in the Late Bronze II or Late Bronze III (ca. mid-12th century B.C.E.)—without inspecting the pottery and comparing it to strata west of the Jordan. And as mentioned above, it is difficult to decide whether Phase 13 represents a real, independent period of occupation in the history of the site, in the early Iron I; another possibility would be to see this phase as a creation of the excavators, who combined Late Bronze and Iron I sherds found in the “rampart” on the slope into one layer.

To judge from the radiocarbon results at Shiloh, the settlement of Phase 12 at Tall al-Umayri was established in the middle Iron I, in the late 12th or first half of the 11th century, and came to an end around the middle or second half of the 11th century B.C.E. This settlement marks a formative phase of territorial organization in the Ammonite region. It could have been destroyed as a result of local skirmishes, or a conflict with one of the rising neighboring territorial formations. The site was resettled in the late Iron I, in the late 11th or early- to mid-10th century B.C.E. This is all that can be said with relative confidence about the history of Tall al-Umayri in the Iron I.

All other assertions of the Tall al-Umayri team reflect their preconceptions regarding the history of Ancient Israel, that is, their literal, uncritical reading of the biblical text. These assertions have nothing to do with archaeology.

(a) There is no way to identify the ethnic identity of the Late Bronze inhabitants of Tall al-Umayri. First, Late Bronze finds and texts do not disclose ethnic groups. Second, the biblical references to ancient, pre-Israelite groups that inhabited Canaan, including the Amorites, are late Iron II constructs which reflect the ideology of the late Iron II (and still later) authors regarding the ethno-genesis and identity of Ancient Israel (e.g., Uehlinger 1999–2000 and bibliography).

(b) There is no reason to assert that the inhabitants of Phase 13 belonged to a new ethnic group. The pottery of the site has its roots in the long-term tradition of the second millennium B.C.E., and the architecture—though typical of the Iron Age with no deep roots in the Late Bronze—can be understood against the

socio-economic background and territorio-political organization of the inhabitants rather than their ethnic or national origin.

(c) There is no reason to identify the inhabitants of Phase 12 with the tribe of Reuben. The description of the tribal allotments in early Israel is late in date (in its final version representing a Priestly work), and even if founded on early realities, these realities do not represent premonarchic times (recently Lissovsky and Naʾaman 2003 with bibliography; see also Schorn 1997).

(d) Even if some sort of a tribal system did exist in Ancient Israel as early as the Iron I, there is no archaeological reason to suggest Tall al-Umayri as a settlement of the earliest group of Israelites (or proto-Israelites).

(e) There is no reason to identify the system of settlements around Tall al-Umayri with Israel of the Merneptah stele. First, as shown above, the destruction of Phase 12 at Tall al-Umayri postdates the Merneptah campaign by a century and a half. Second, there is no way to identify the exact location of the group named Israel in the Merneptah stele, except, in general terms, in the highlands of Canaan (see, e.g., Yurco 1986; Ahlström 1986: 37–43; Hasel 1994; Rainey 2001). Any other assertion is mere speculation.

(f) The Tall al-Umayri finds have nothing to do with the (biblical) idea that Ancient Israel emerged in Transjordan and entered Cisjordan from the east, and there is no reason to suggest that after the destruction of their town the inhabitants of Tall al-Umayri moved to the area of Shechem in Cisjordan. A single type of bowl or an incision on the body of a storage jar (Herr 1999: 70; 2000: 176) is not sufficient reason for theories which move people on the map. The material culture of Tall al-Umayri is typical of the Iron I in the entire hilly area of the southern Levant; it shows no explicit connection to a specific area west of the Jordan.

(g) There is no archaeological reason to see the inhabitants of the 11th century B.C.E. settlement at Tall al-Umayri as a new ethnic group.

Summary

Iron I Tall al-Umayri supplies important data on Transjordan in the Iron I. This middle Iron I settlement, which was probably established in the first half of the 11th century B.C.E., displays the earliest archaeological evidence for territorial organization in the highlands of Transjordan. The site has nothing to do with the (late in date) biblical traditions about the settlement of the Israelites, including the tribe of Reuben, or with the campaign of Merneptah in the late 13th century B.C.E. In the Tall al-Umayri case, an entire “historical” reconstruction was based on an uncritical reading of the biblical text rather than on straightforward archaeological evidence. The latter emphasizes the importance of archaeology as an independent, bias-free witness of the past—as advocated by David Ussishkin.

Appendix:

Tall al-Umayri and the History of the Collared Rim Pithoi

In an article published a few years ago, Herr (2001) proposed a division between the date of appearance of the collared rim pithoi in Cis- and Transjordan: “whereas

collared rim pithoi disappeared toward the end of the Iron I period in Cisjordan, they seemed to have continued throughout the Iron Age [and in fact the Persian period too—I. F.] at Tall al-Umayri and elsewhere on the central Transjordanian plateau" (Herr 2001: 237). This means that this type of vessel was in use for almost a millennium. There are two peculiar points in this idea:

1. that the same type of vessel had a different history in an area which in some cases covered a distance of no more than a few kilometers
2. that a vessel-type continued to be used for many centuries

To the best of my knowledge, both points contradict all that we know about ceramic typology and pottery production and style.

Herr based his observations on the appearance of collared rim pithoi in three different "episodes," dating to the Iron I, early Iron II, and the late Iron II/Persian period. His first mistake was to compare apples and oranges—restorable pithoi in a rich assemblage found in the "casemates" of Fields A and B, versus later surfaces where only rim-sherds of collared rim pithos were found: "The data from Episode 2 are the most problematic because we could isolate very few surface deposits to this period, and we have found no complete or reconstructable vessels. Moreover, pithos sherds came from layers that feasibly could contain earlier material, as well. . . . For Episode 3 we do not have complete examples from Umayri, but the sherds occur in such great numbers and such large sizes . . . that they cannot be intrusions from earlier periods" (Herr 2001: 241).

It should be obvious that in mound situations old sherds—especially from a period strongly represented at the site—are typically found in later contexts. At Megiddo, for instance, the Early Bronze IB was a period of long and strong activity, with the settlement extending over a large area in the main mound and the flat area to its east. Indeed, Early Bronze IB sherds are found in significant numbers in many later levels at Megiddo, even as late as the Iron IIB. They may have originated from fill materials, brick materials, etc. In other words, when the inhabitants of the later settlements at Megiddo constructed their houses they probably used earth from the slope of the hill for fills and bricks; this earth contained Early Bronze I pottery from old dumps, etc.

Herr's second mistake is that he deals with diverse types of pithoi. The vessels from the Iron I context are clearly the typical collared rim pithoi, which have parallels in every Iron I site in the highlands of Cis- and Transjordan. Needless to say, some of the items feature local sub-forms, but this does not cast doubt on their date or typological affiliation. Most of the sherds belonging to Episodes 2 and 3 do not belong to this family. Of the three (!) rim sherds that represent Episode 2, one is a collared rim jar (Herr 2001: Fig. 14.5: 1) that originated from the "surface of the watercourse"—hardly a stratified context; another (Herr 2001: No. 2) which may belong to this group came from "postoccupational debris"; the third is not a collared rim pithos. From the rim sherds affiliated with Episode 3, only one or two seem to belong to collared rim pithoi (Herr 2001: Fig. 14.5: 8, 9). The other rims belong to different vessels—a holemouth pithos and a pithos with a slanted shoulder. Some of the latter belong to the Iron IIA (see, for instance, the late Iron I/

Iron IIA single-occupation site of Khirbet ed-Dawwara—Finkelstein 1990: Fig. 16: 11–12; Fig. 17: 9) and others may belong to a later phase of the Iron Age (e.g., Herr 2001: Fig. 14.5: 11). Six of the eight sherds belonging to Episode 3 came from fills (no data are given for No. 11).

To sum up, there is nothing new in the Tall al-Umayri finds. The collared rim pithoi belong to the Iron I. Collared rim sherds that appear in later contexts originated in the Iron I settlement and reached the later contexts mainly with fill materials. Other types of pithoi appear later than the Iron I. All the above is obvious and I would not have bothered to deal with it had I not seen citations that take Herr's erroneous theory as basis for further studies (e.g., Smith and Levy 2008: 75).

There is an important lesson here: ceramic typology must be based on clear, preferably restorable assemblages from safe stratigraphic context. One should not try to change the world with a few stray sherds from fills.

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From Megiddo to Tamassos and Back: Putting the “Proto-Ionic Capital” in Its Place

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Thirty years ago, Yigal Shiloh published a comprehensive monograph entitled *The Proto-Aeolic Capital and Israelite Ashlar Masonry* (1979). Although I accept many of Shiloh’s conclusions, in this article I refute the basic concept that the Levantine stone volutes¹ are structural capitals and reevaluate the volutes’ true physical and cultic place.²

The Naissance of the “Proto-Ionic Capital”

The first stone volute³ was excavated by Gottlieb Schumacher in 1903 at Tell el-Mutasellim (Tel Megiddo) (1908: 118–20, Fig. 178). Schumacher, an engineer and surveyor by profession, had studied classical architecture and he automatically assumed that the stone volute was a structural capital which he dated to the Common Era. However, after consulting with Otto Puchstein (1887), Schumacher realized that the stone volute belonged to a much earlier period. They were probably both aware of Max Ohnefalsch-Richter’s excavations at Tamassos in Cyprus and the stone volute motifs uncovered there which were considered to be a prototype of the later Greek Ionic capital (Ohnefalsch-Richter 1896: 115).

Twenty years later, the Oriental Institute team excavated an additional four nearly identical stone volutes at Megiddo (Fisher 1929: 68–73; Lamon and Shipton 1939: 55 Fig. 67, and footnote 37). They were discovered near the find-spot of Schumacher’s original stone volute and were not *in situ*. The excavation director, Clarence Fisher, was also aware of the Tamassos volutes, which were dated to the 7th century B.C.E., and having no other means of dating the Megiddo volutes he presumed that they must be more or less contemporary with the Tamassos examples. The Tamassos volutes were *in antis*; flanking the entrances of two monumental built tombs. Fisher therefore presumed that the Megiddo stone volutes must once have been similarly located in a monumental building. The only building of monumental proportions that was in the vicinity of the find-spots of the stone

Author’s note: My thanks to Rodica Penchas of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University for preparing the drawings in this article.

1. The author uses the term *stone volute* in preference to *proto-ionic*, *proto-aeolic capital*, *timorah*, or *volute capital*. The reason for this choice of terminology will be elucidated upon in this article.

2. This article is not intended to be a comprehensive review of all of the known stone volutes. Instead, only those stone volutes that provide clues to their original placement—selected examples from Ain Dara, Mudaybi, Megiddo, Jerusalem, and Ramat Rahel—will be reviewed. The possible origin of the motif will not be dealt with here.

3. Shiloh’s M1.

volute was Building 338. Therefore, purely by association, the building and the stone volutes were dated by Fisher to between 600 to 800 B.C.E. (Fisher 1929: 71–73). Fisher identified Building 338 as a cultic structure—a temple to Astarte (1929: 68ff.; Lamon and Shipton 1939: 57 and footnote 44).

The association of the stone volutes with Building 338 continued even after 1927, when the directorship of the Megiddo excavation passed from Clarence Fisher to P. L. O. Guy. However, Guy revised Fisher's stratigraphy, and placed Building 338 in Stratum IV, in the 10th century. Guy also excavated the famous pillared complexes which he identified as "Solomon's stables," and Building 338's proximity to the northern stables caused him to redesignate it the "House of the Commander of the Chariotry." Thus, the stone volutes become associated with the 10th-century building exploits of Solomon. Building 338, in the guise of the "Commander's House," was illustrated by architect Laurence C. Woolman (Guy 1931: Fig. 22).

Herbert May, a senior member of the Chicago team, accepted Guy's redating of Building 338 to the 10th century B.C.E., but at the same time followed the line initiated by Fisher and argued that Building 338 was a cultic building. May published his hypothesis in a separate publication (1935). The stone volutes, and their origin and connection to the "tree of life" motif, were discussed in a chapter written by Robert Engberg (1935: 35–42). An alternative reconstruction of Building 338 (May 1935: Plates V and VI) was provided by another member of the Chicago team, the architect T. A. L. Concannon. His reconstruction was obviously heavily influenced by the Tamassos examples and the Megiddo stone volutes are, from that time on, shown as structural capitals *in antis*.

In the final report (Lamon and Shipton 1939), Building 338 is given pride of place, occupying nearly half of the description of the "main phase of Stratum IV." Both the Woolman and Concannon reconstructions, despite their contradictions, were published in *Megiddo I* (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 47–61, Figs. 59 and 68). However, Woolman's reconstruction does not show the stone volutes; instead it emphasizes the construction technique of the building's stone socle, which was built of fieldstones interspersed with ashlar masonry piers (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 49–53, Figs. 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, and 65). According to him, the stone socle supported the mudbrick superstructure and the ashlar masonry piers were used to support a series of wooden columns which, in turn, supported the roof (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 48–49 and Fig. 59).

In the 1930s, the Joint Expedition to Samaria-Sebastia, directed by John W. Crowfoot, discovered six near-identical stone volutes. Three were found reused as simple building blocks in the foundations of a late Roman building (Crowfoot 1942: Fig. 6 and Pl. xxix) and another three in the vicinity of one of the Hellenistic towers (Crowfoot 1942: 16 and Pls. vii/i and xxx). Due to their similarity to the Megiddo volutes, the Samaria volutes were also attributed to the building exploits of the early Israelite kings. However, in the case of Samaria, they were attributed to the 9th century B.C.E. (the Omride dynasty) instead of the 10th century B.C.E. (the Solomonic period). An illustration (Crowfoot 1942: Fig. 7) drawn in 1932 by the Joint Expedition's architect, Jacob Pinkerfeld, shows the Samaria stone volutes crown-

ing ashlar pilasters (despite the fact that no remains signifying the use of pilasters were ever found). Thus, at Samaria the foundation-level ashlar masonry piers and wooden columns of the “Woolman” reconstruction were transformed into full-height ashlar masonry pilasters which were crowned by stone volutes. That is, both views regarding the architectural placement of the stone volutes were combined and literally “fixed” in stone. And from the 1930s onward stone volutes have either been shown crowning an (imaginary) engaged pilaster,⁴ as reconstructed at Samaria, or shown *in antis*, flanking an entranceway as reconstructed at Megiddo.

In short, these well-known illustrations showing the proposed architectural placement of the stone volutes are mere speculation. Basic facts were ignored; for example, only the foundation courses at Megiddo and Samaria are built of ashlar masonry; the superstructure was of mudbrick, yet a few of the stone volutes weighed ca. two tons⁵ and could not have been supported by a mudbrick superstructure. Also, although it is now universally accepted that the Tamassos stone volutes are some 200–300 years later than the Megiddo and Samaria examples, the architectural placement of the latter was based on the location of the Tamassos examples. This necessitated that the Megiddo and Samaria volutes be associated with a building and reconstructed as performing a structural and architectural function. Therefore the question must be raised anew: Do the Tamassos volutes truly reflect the structural and architectural function of the Levantine stone volute motifs?

The Tamassos Tombs

Four tombs excavated by Max Ohnefalsch-Richter (1893; 1896) in the Chomazoudia necropolis in Cyprus were identified by him as the tombs of the kings of Tamassos; further excavations were conducted by Hans-Günter Buchholz (Buchholz et al. 2002a: 220; see also Buchholz et al. 2002b; 2002/2003; 2005; Matthäus forthcoming). Only two of the tombs, numbers 5 and 12, are relevant to this article. They are both subterranean stone-built chambers isolated from the surrounding earth by masonry revetment walls, unique in the history of funeral architecture on Cyprus (Matthäus forthcoming). They are significant here solely due to the volute motifs located at the subterranean entrance to both tomb chambers. Ohnefalsch-Richter described the tombs in detail—the pilasters, false windows, mock door bolts, and roof beams—which he emphasized were all architectural details that were stone copies of items normally carved from wood. In other words, the stone architecture purposely imitated contemporary timber construction (Buchholz et al. 2002: 221–26). The Tamassos volutes are not three dimensional, stand-alone items, the volute motif and the pilaster are both incised on a single, relatively thin, stone slab, i.e., they resemble a wooden door jamb (see Fig. 1). Katja Walcher stresses that the finely dressed masonry of the Tamassos tombs only superficially resembles classic header-and-stretcher ashlar masonry construction and this technique was

4. This was the option preferred by Betancourt (1977: 27) despite the lack of any corroborating evidence.

5. The largest stone volutes at Megiddo weighed ca. 2 tons; at Samaria ca. 1¾ tons; at Hazor ca. 1½ tons; at Jerusalem ca. ¾ ton; at Ramat Rahel ca. ½ ton.

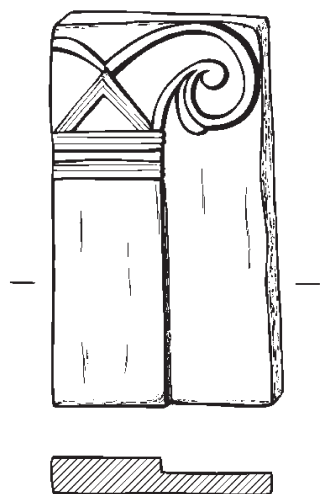


Fig. 1. Tamassos Tomb 12: A volute motif and pilaster (one of a pair) carved in low relief on a single stone slab. Dimensions of the stone slab: height 175 cm, width 100 cm, depth 18–10 cm.

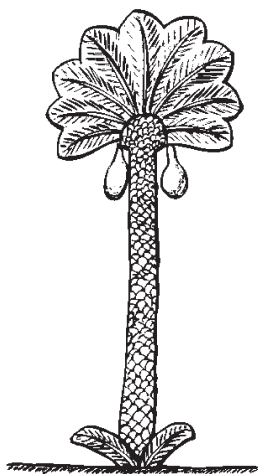


Fig. 2. The standard depiction of a date palm on Assyrian reliefs. The single trunk, not hidden by adult offshoots, plus the two young basal offshoots, denotes this is a cultivated tree for date production.

not intended to imitate ashlar masonry construction; rather the tombs' architecture represents a stage in the development from wooden tomb chamber to stone-built chamber (Walcher 2005a; 2005b; 2007).⁶

In short, the stone volutes from the Tamassos tombs imitate wooden volutes; they are not stone load-bearing capitals and cannot be used to prove the tuse of earlier or even contemporaneous examples of stone volutes as load-bearing capitals.

The Volute Motif and the Tree of Life

The architectural function of stone volutes may be in dispute but the meaning behind the volute motif is not: It is generally accepted that the motif represents the tree of life (Shiloh 1977: 45–46), which in small-art is often represented in a highly stylized form (Merhav 1980). In Assyria the tree of life is shown as a date palm, representing Assyrian agricultural abundance (Porter 2003: 21–26; for further discussion see Giovino 2007).

The date palm, *Phoenix dactylifera* L., is dioecious, i.e., it has male and female reproductive units on separate plants. However, it is also unique in having the ability to reproduce asexually *and* produce an edible fruit (the date). In fact, the date palm's primary means of reproduction is by producing offshoots which form in a basal auxiliary bud. A female date palm produces about a dozen viable offshoots before it matures and bears date clusters. The young offshoots slowly unfurl and branch outwards, away from the mother palm's trunk, separated one from another by a triangular-shaped stub—a remnant of the previous season's frond. As the tree matures and grows taller, the old triangular-shaped stubs eventually break off, leaving rhomboid-shaped marks.⁷

6. I wish to thank Dr. Harmut Matthäus and Ms. Katja Walcher for making their research available to me.

7. The transition from triangular-shaped stubs to rhomboid-shaped marks occurs naturally. On cultivated female palms, the triangular-shaped stubs are purposely broken off so that the palm can be more easily climbed in order to harvest the dates. Only on a juvenile, offshoot-producing palm will these basal triangular-shaped stubs remain undisturbed. The triangle and rhomboid arrangement of the date palm is clearly depicted on the various artistic renditions of the volute motif,

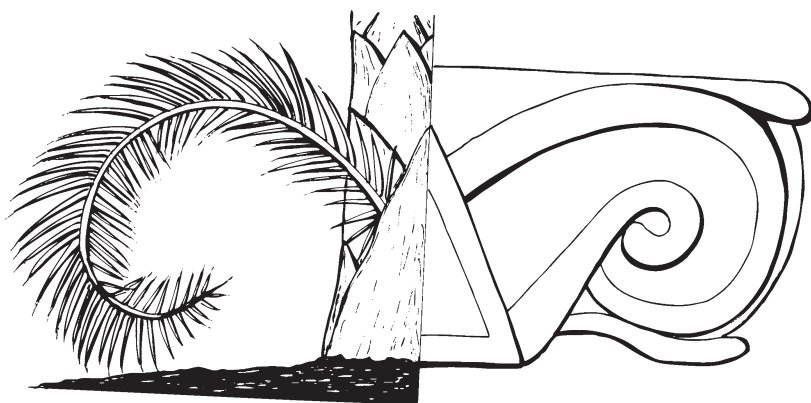


Fig. 3. A basal offshoot emerging from a triangular branch stub compared with the stylized motif, a typical volute, and triangle. Both signify rebirth.

All date palms naturally produce offshoots, but only cultivated date palms will have these offshoots removed once they are independently viable. A lone date palm with a single-trunk and a single-crown signifies that it is a cultivated tree, while a non-cultivated date palm will replicate itself endlessly and a huge, multi-trunked “palm-nest” will form.

All the depictions of date palms, e.g., on Assyrian reliefs, on cylinder seals, or on ivories, show an upright, single-trunked palm with a single-crown of palm fronds. That is, only cultivated date palms are shown (see Fig. 2). This ability to clone a date palm, exactly replicating its fruit-bearing properties, is a fundamental aspect of the Assyrian “tree of life.” For example, vegetative propagation scenes are depicted in a stylistic form in Ashurnasirpal II’s Northwest Palace at Nimrud.⁸ Young date palms are shown, joined to their mother palm by ribbon-like stems that represent the small irrigation canals needed to ensure the growth and survival of the offshoots. At the base of each stylized mother palm the new season’s growth is emphasized in the form of two young offshoots that unfurl outwards.⁹

In short, the volute motif represents the birth and rebirth of the Assyrian “tree of life.” The offshoots, which signify the rebirth of the palm, are the volutes that spring from either side of a triangle, which represents the basal palm frond stub (see Fig. 3). In other words, the volute motif represents the ongoing cycle of life that takes place at the base of the date palm; it does not represent the crown of the palm.¹⁰

including the stone volutes, as noted by Merhav (1980: 95–99), though she offers no explanation for the triangle-versus-rhomboid differentiation.

8. Albenda (1994) recognized that the palms showed some sort of tangible arrangement but she did not realize they were stylized vegetative propagation scenes.

9. The fertilization of the palms in order that they will bear date clusters is shown in an adjacent scene (Porter 1993).

10. Sometimes the volute motif will also be crowned by a palmette, a single palm crown (Rykwert 1994: 11), presumably to accentuate the fact that the date palm is cultivated.

The “Tree of Life,” Volute Motifs, and Temple Architecture

Date palms, symbolizing the tree of life, have been used in one form or another to decorate entrances or façades (Howard-Carter 1983: 65). They are often depicted flanking a temple façade; an early example is a stone column-base that imitates the imbrications of the palm tree from 18th-century B.C.E. Mari (Barrelet 1950: 9–35). At late 8th-century B.C.E. Khorsabad the entrances to the temples of Shamash, Nabu, and Sin were flanked by columns (Barnett 1975: 89; Howard-Carter 1983: 65). In addition, numerous ceramic Iron Age shrine models show pillars or sacred trees flanking a temple entrance (see Shiloh 1979: 32–33 with further bibliography). Another frequently illustrated example is a 9th-century B.C.E. stone tablet from Sippar (ANEP 178), showing the god Shamash seated in a canopy structure (*timmu*), which is flanked by two palm-tree columns; the figures are in profile, so only one palm-tree column is shown (there were obviously a pair *in antis* flanking the sanctuary). The column rests on a volute-motif base and is also crowned by a (in this case evidently wooden) volute-motif capital. Two divine effigies above the canopy hold ropes that are connected to a sun ray disc (*niphu*) which also rests on a volute-motif base (Ornan 2005: 64–65).

This brief review of the connection between the volute motif and sacral architecture brings us back to the Tamassos tombs. These unique tombs employ architectural elements usually found in a sanctuary; they are hitherto unknown in Cypriot funeral architecture (Buchholz et al. 2002: 227; Matthäus forthcoming). For example, there are “false doors” and “false windows” (which also incorporate the volute motif) that have parallels only in sacral contexts (Walcher 2005a), and the imitation wooden ceiling beams in Tamassos Tomb 5 are reminiscent of the ceiling from the sanctuary of Eshmun (Buchholz et al. 2005: 27, Fig. 27). The Levantine volute motif also extends to the realm of the dead and it can be traced on Phoenician, and later Punic, funerary stelae (Shiloh 1979: 39–41, Figs. 58–61, and further bibliography).

In brief, the volute motif, representing the continual rebirth of the “tree of life,” eventually became associated with funerary cult and ritual. This tradition continues into the classical period, when the palmette motif, together with the ritual use of palm fronds, is associated with funerary stelae (Rykwert 1994).

The recognition that the volute motif is a stylized version of the basal, vegetative, propagation of a date palm must be taken into account when the architectural placement of the stone volutes is reexamined.

Putting the Stone Volutes in Their Place

At the time of writing, a total of 49 stone volutes have been found in the Levant,¹¹ but only two have been found *in situ*—one at Ain Dara in Syria and one at Mudaybi in Jordan.¹²

11. Israel: Jerusalem, 1; Gezer, 1; Gerizim, 3; Hazor, 2; Dan, 3; Samaria, 7; Ramat Raḥel, 10; Megiddo, 13. Jordan: ‘Ain Sara, 1; Amman, 2; Mudaybi, 5. Syria: Ain Dara, 1.

12. The excavators claim that it is *in situ*, but actually it was found toppled from its original position. However, it is agreed that its original location is clear.

At Ain Dara, stele F15,¹³ located in the Iron Age temple, is the largest and most impressive of all the stone volutes excavated until now. Carved from basalt, it was found damaged but still standing upright, occupying the central position in the cella of the temple and flanked by two other stelae on either side (Abu Assaf 1990). It stands more than 2 ½ m high and is more than 2 m long but it is less than 1 m deep.

Clearly the Ain Dara stone volute motif was a free standing votive stele set on the floor in the central position in a sacred context¹⁴; it was not a structural architectural element.

At Mudaybi, stone volute Md 5 was located in the gatehouse. It was found dislodged from the top of one of the pier walls of the four-chamber gate and lay face down, on top of rock tumble and other debris, more or less level with the modern surface (Andrews et al. 2002: 135). The gateway's surface was difficult to define, and, although not explicitly stated by the excavators, the stone volute presumably rested on fallen debris that was once associated with the gate's superstructure. In other words, the stone volute was not exactly *in situ*, as it had become dislodged from the pier wall and had toppled over soon after the collapse of the gate's superstructure. It measures 93 cm high, 186 cm long, and 47 cm deep (see <http://www.vkrp.org/studies/historical/capitals/info/capitals-Mudaybi.asp>). Four other similarly sized stone volutes were discovered in the immediate vicinity. All are only carved on one face and their narrow sides are not carved. The gatehouse was accordingly reconstructed as having stone volutes as finials located at the end of the six gate piers (only the lower part of the gate was built of stone). The gate piers were built of rough-cut limestone boulders, chinked with smaller stones (Andrews et al. 2002: 134; Mattingly et al. 1999: 127–44). A large limestone monolith, found in the same square, was reconstructed as a lintel. It measured ca. 68 cm × ca. 45 cm and was 305 cm long. The excavators followed the traditional view that the stone volutes functioned as structural capitals and reconstructed them all as supporting stone lintels (based on the “lintel” found) and wooden beams (not preserved) which would have spanned the 4.1 m gap between the opposing piers. However, this reconstruction is untenable. The Mudaybi volutes are narrow, their width is only half of their height and less than a third of their length; such a narrow limestone block would not have been able to withstand the stress placed on it by a lintel that supported the roof. Rather, their dimensions show that the stone volutes were used as orthostats. Furthermore, the stone monolith excavated within the gateway would not have been used as a lintel; a stone lintel¹⁵ demands monumental stone construction all around for anything but the shortest spans (Wright 2005: 24). In addition, a similarly sized stone monolith was found set upright as a monolithic pillar by the gate's outer tower and was still *in situ* (Mattingly et al. 1999: 134). Therefore, the stone “lintel”

13. Mistakenly titled orthostat by Shiloh (1979: 30).

14. The earliest-known Corinthian capital was also a votive capital. It was located in the cella of the 5th-century Temple of Apollo at Bassae (Lawrence 1983: 231–33).

15. Stone has a low tensile capacity and is not suitable for use as a beam or lintel, as it cannot span as great a distance as wood, but it could be used (structurally) as a column or arch (Salvadori 2002: 64, 80, 288). Stone is also ca 4 times heavier than wood (Wright 2005: 31).

referred to above must have once served a similar purpose. At Iron Age Mudaybi only a mudbrick arch could have spanned the 4 m wide entrance. In addition, the stone built section represented only the lower courses of the gateway; the section above would have been of mudbrick and/or rubble construction, thus necessitating the use of orthostats—a crucial element when a wall is built of mudbrick or rubble (see Wright 2005: 58).

In short, the dimensions of the Mudaybi stone volutes show that they could not have served as structural capitals and supported a stone lintel. Instead, they can be reconstructed as orthostats that served a structural function in the gateway, protecting the mudbrick/rubble section of the wall.

Let us turn to some of the other Levantine stone volutes to see if they can shed light on their original placement.

At Megiddo, two stone volutes, M5339 and M5340 (Shiloh's M4 and M5), were found in secondary use in Stratum III. Stone volute M5339 was adjacent to the rim of Silo 1414 and Stone volute M5340 was some 20 m to the west, incorporated into a Stratum III wall, Locus 1565 in grid Square Q9. These two stone volutes are identical in size; both are 57 cm high, 244 cm and 239 cm long, respectively,¹⁶ and 57 cm and 56 cm wide, respectively. Volute M5340 has the motif carved on one face but volute M5339, although shaped, has been left plain. The original location of these two stone volutes is unknown; however, the excavators (who continued to follow the line set by the Tamassos examples) saw them as originally flanking the entranceway of courtyard Gate 1567 in grid Square Q10 (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 12–16, Figs. 17 and 18). However, Gate 1567 has only three courses of ashlar masonry and these courses are merely the built-up foundations (Franklin 2006: 108), while the superstructure was of mudbrick. An alternative location has been proposed by Ussishkin, namely, that these two stone volutes adorned the entrance to Palace 1723 (Ussishkin 1970). However, once again, only the lower courses of the palace were built of ashlar masonry, the upper courses were of mudbrick. An important point, apparently not considered until now, is that each of these stone volutes weighed approximately two tons! It should be obvious that these massive stone elements could not have perched on top of a mudbrick wall and there is no evidence for any ashlar built walls or pilasters that could have carried the excessive weight of these stone volutes. It should also be noted that their height equals their width. There are, however, other import clues regarding their original placement. As noted by the excavators (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 15) and remarked on by Shiloh (1979: 3) and Ussishkin (1970: 215), each stone volute has a semicircular depression on its upper surface. The semicircle is in the center of the long axis but located over to one side of the short axis (Lamon and Shipton 1939: Fig. 17). In addition there are three pairs of tenon or dowel holes, some 7 to 10 cm deep, located equidistant from each semicircle (two sets on M5339 and one set on M5340). If the two stone volutes are placed back to back (with the carved face of M5340 exposed) the semicircle forms a complete circular depression flanked by the three sets of

16. This is the overall length, including the curl of the volutes; the length of each base is 146 cm.

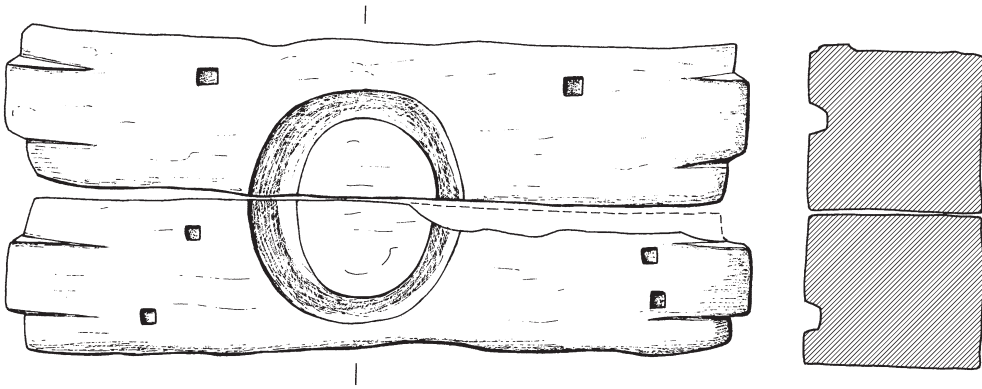


Fig. 4. The two largest Megiddo stone volutes, each weighing ca. 2 tons. When placed back-to-back they served as a base for a pillar or cultic pole. Section view: M5339 (left plain) and M5340 (with volute motif carved on one side only). Top view: M5339 (4 tenon holes) and M5340 (two tenon holes).

tenon holes (see Fig. 4). The circular depression is then immediately recognizable as a place to position a wooden column, and the tenon holes would have aided in holding the wooden column securely in place (see Wright 2005: 59).

In short, the weight and dimension of these two massive stone volutes negates their use as capitals or as orthostats. Instead, when placed back to back they form one architectural element, a volute-motif base for a wooden column, possibly similar to that depicted on the relief from Sippar (*ANEP* 178).

Also from Megiddo is a (broken) stone volute, M10, whose two faces and sides are carved.¹⁷ It is the only Megiddo volute that has a pronounced (13 cm high) abacus, and the volute motif also has a palmette fan located between the apex of the triangle and the abacus. Its dimensions are 60 cm high (abacus 13 cm), 110 cm long, and just 28 cm wide. This too is a narrow stone volute, whose width is just half its height—negating its use as a structural capital. However, this double-sided volute is designed to be viewed in the round and it closely resembles, in style and dimension, the many free-standing stone “votive capitals” from Cyprus (for examples, see Ciasca 1962).

In Jerusalem just one stone volute was unearthed, found at the base of the east scarp of the City of David in mixed debris (Kenyon 1963: 16). It measures 60 cm high, 130 cm long, and 43 cm wide. The volute motif is carved on one face only. The volute can also be viewed from the side, and the reverse has been worked smooth. Of particular interest is the slight depression that runs along the outer top edge of the stone volute. This depressed section is a “ribbon” about 14 cm wide with two dowel or tenon holes located at ca. 35 cm from either end (Shiloh 1979: 11). Although this stone volute is also relatively narrow, the fact that the volutes are carved the full depth of the side must negate its use as a regular orthostat.

17. This capital was retrieved in the 1950s from an unknown location on the tell and is now near the entrance to the site (Shiloh 1979: 3 and note 18).

The dimensions and markings along its top signify that it may have been part of an elaborate stone and wood balustrade, similar to the balustrade with volute motifs depicted on the “false windows” at Tamassos (Walcher 2005a: 78–83) and also similar to one of the (two) balustrades found at Ramat Raḥel (Shiloh 1979: Pl. 14.2).

The stone volutes from Ramat Raḥel also provide a clue to their function, although only three of the ten found there (RR1, RR2, and RR10) were more or less intact. Nine of the volutes (RR1–4 and RR6–10) are practically identical in size and have the motif carved on only one face (Shiloh 1979: 8–10). Their heights are nearly consistent, ranging from 50 cm to 59 cm, their length from 108 cm to 116 cm, and their width from 39 cm to 44 cm. (Stone volute RR10 is the tallest, longest, and narrowest, measuring 59 cm high, 116 cm long, and 39 cm wide.) Although impossible to determine, due to the fragmentary state of some of the stone volutes, the excavators inferred that all of the Ramat Raḥel stone volutes had a central groove running from the front to the back (Shiloh 1979: 9). The groove is ca. 8 cm wide at the front, narrows to ca. 5 cm near the center, and then opens up again slightly towards the back (the groove in RR2 appears not to break through to the other side). Only RR10 could be examined by the author from the back, which proved to be very roughly finished. It therefore appears that at least some, if not all, of the Ramat Raḥel stone volutes were designed to project slightly from a wall; their unworked backs and (most of) their sides would have been integrated into a wall. The groove on top of the stone volute must have held some sort of an architectural element, probably made of wood (“attached,” possibly using the Samian technique; see Keesling 2003: 79, notes 84 and 86). The only Ramat Raḥel volute with the motif carved on both faces and with the sides fully carved, which obviously meant it was to be viewed in the round, was also the smallest stone volute—RR5. It is 32 cm high, 80 cm long, and 30 cm wide. It was found in a fragmentary condition and the presence of a central groove was only conjectured.

In short, most of the Ramat Raḥel stone volutes seem to have been partially integrated into an architectural scheme that may have supported a series of wooden posts, standards, or icons. The smallest volute, RR5, is different, and it is presumably a free standing votive capital.

But what of the other stone volutes not discussed in this article? Many have no tell-tale clues such as dowel holes. None, due to their weight and/or dimensions, are suitable as structural capitals integrated into mudbrick architecture. However some, especially those with the motif carved on both faces, appear to be votive capitals, similar in function to the volute capitals from Megiddo and Ramat Raḥel, and there is no reason to classify them any differently from the (nonstructural) Cypriot votive capitals.

Conclusion

The volute motif is a stylized version of the vegetative propagation of the date palm. The volute motif depicts the base of the date-palm, and the different stone volutes—depending on their dimensions, size, and ornamentation—served a number of different functions. Stone volutes were used as bases for wooden pillars,

cultic poles, or cult objects; they were incorporated into monumental architecture as orthostats and balustrades; and they were set up in ritual contexts as votive capitals. In any event, the stone volutes did not serve as structural capitals.

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Voyage to Yarimuta

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The land of Yarimuta exhibits an almost mythical status in the one corpus in which it appears—the letters sent by Rib-Addi, king of Byblos, found at el-Amarna. Yarimuta is the safe place from which the necessities for Byblos’s survival can always be drawn. It is the land of plenty, the inexhaustible fund of pharaonic munificence.

Errors aside, “the land (of) Yarimuta” is spelled only one way. It appears consistently as KUR *ia-ri-mu-ta* (68: 27 *ia-ri-im-mu-ta* is likely an audial lapse). Unlike other geographical names, it is never identified as a town. Nor is it connected explicitly at any time with a particular town that serves as its administrative center. In this respect, it is like Amurru, to the northeast of Byblos. One might justifiably identify it as the mountainous region inland from and north of Ullasa; and yet, Amurru has a capital, Tunip (present-day Tell Asharneh according to Goren, Finkelstein, and Na’aman 2004: 101–21; the petrographic analysis indicates that Amurru’s capital shifted several times), whereas Yarimuta has none that we know of. Moreover, letters come from the area and the kings of Amurru. None that we know of comes from Yarimuta.

The original editors of the el-Amarna tablets entertained the likelihood that Yarimuta might be the Delta region itself (Weber [in VAB 2.2.] 1915: 1153, 1169–72; followed by others, such as Liverani 1998: 38–39 n. 109). There are, of course, reasons to reach this conclusion. The first is that Yarimuta is a source of grain in particular.

Over and over, famously and eloquently, Rib-Addi relates the impoverishment of the citizenry in his service, from whom he drew the troops manning the walls and maintaining the control of his town, the *hupšū*—the elements that will eventually flee from him, without harm, to towns where there is wheat (EA 125: 16–30; 130: 32–42). In EA 74–75, we get first a statement that the GAZ enmity is strong (74: 14; 75: 10–11), then:

As the gods of *your* land *live*,
exhausted are our sons, the (our?) daughters (who are) with us,¹ for spending into the
land of Yarimuta for the sustenance of our lives. (74: 14–17)

1. Moran (1992: 144 n. 5) entertains the possibility that *qadu* here is not the preposition (“along with”) followed by the object “us” (*-nu*), but a Canaanite term for furnishings. An alternative, adopted here, is to take it as the preposition with pronominal object (uniquely at Amarna, Moran observes), in the sense of “those who are with us.” See further on the daughters in the parallel passages: The ones that are still unsold (i.e., unwed), and thus at home, are the ones being shipped off, in this passage.

Exhausted are the (our) sons, the (our) daughters, the wooden goods of the (our) houses for spending into the land of Yarimuta for <for> the sustenance of our lives. (75: 11–14)

In EA 81, the statement that follows the claim of exhausted personal resources in the other two letters, a highly literate paronomastic statement about Byblos's fields being like an unwed woman for lack of "ploughing," precedes the same claim, this time explicitly about the *hupšū*:

exhausted are [their sons, their daugh]ter[s], the wooden goods of their houses [for spending into the land of Yarimuta for the sustenance of their lives. (81: 38–41)

And, in EA 90, the claim precedes yet another one common to the previous letters, the image of a caged bird for a town in siege conditions:

ex[hausted are our son]s, our [daughters, the wooden goods of] the houses for spending into the land of Yarimuta for <for> (cf. 75: 14 above) the sustenance of our lives. (90: 36–39)

These references go along with several others from the same period, of Rib-Addi's contention with 'Abdi-Ashirta of Amurru, that deserve explicit mention here. Thus, in EA 85, Rib-Addi complains of three years' campaigning against him. He has suffered, he says, two years' deprivation—quite possibly, the rationing—of his grain (= 84: and "our" lack of grain "to eat," deliberately evading the question how much the palace hoarded for planting). He asks,

What am I to say to my *hupšū*?

Exhausted are their sons, their daughters, the wooden goods of their houses for spending into the land of [Ya]rimuta for the sustenance of our lives. (85: 11–15)

What follows here is a plea that the king send grain by ship, along with 400 men and 30 teams of horses (//90: 45–47; cf. 91: 14). Yarimuta and grain also appear together in a broken context in EA 78: 30–31. The assumption that Yarimuta was a grain basket in the sense of a grain-producing region programs most identifications of it (Na'aman 1996: 153–54 n. 14), especially with the furnisher of sustenance to Byblos or, with Liverani (1990: 238–39), to regions served from Şumur.

A somewhat different pattern of complaint about resource depletions appears in other texts. Thus, in the context of the struggles against Aziru and the (other) sons of 'Abdi-Ashirta, Rib-Addi complains:

There is no silver for spending for horses. Everything is exhausted for our life, so give me 30 teams of horses together with chariots. I have teamsters/drivers (and) charioteers, but I have no horse to go against <against> the enemies of the king. (107: 37–45)

Here, the *šir-ma* men of 107: 42 are followed by *maryannuma* in 107: 43 (Moran 1992: 108), and should be connected with the teamsters *'aširū* of the Amarna and Taanach letters and the Ugaritic lists.² Likewise, in EA 112, Rib-Addi reports, while begging for men from the lands of Egypt and Meluhha and for horses,

2. Halpern 2000: 543–45, with references to the Ugaritic, to Taanach Letter 5 (in the context of 6: 12–14), and to EA 107: 37–48, 108: 15, 124: 50–52, another clear reference to the use of teamsters to ferry archers; plus EA 106: 41–49, where they protect the flank of infantry in a plain; note the contrast especially between Taanach Letter 5, where the king in theory enjoys a surfeit

Lo, I have nothing for getting horses. Everything is exhausted for selling into the land of Yarimuta for the sustenance of my life.

The grain to prevent the *hupšū* from deserting, too, is to be sent from Yarimuta. Here the complaint is again rather full:

From whom am I to guard myself and the [king's] town? Formerly, there were garrison men of the king with me and the king furnished grain from the land of Yarimuta for their eating, and look, now, Aziru has attacked me repeatedly. I have no cattle or caprovids (see Moran 1992: 128). Aziru has taken everything and there is no grain for my eating and my *hupšū* men are escaping to towns where there is grain for their eating. (125: 11–29)

It was a natural inference for scholars to make from all of this that Yarimuta was a grain-wealthy region. Indeed, this is one of the thoughts underlying its identification with the Delta (unconsciously, the idea of the Delta spoken of as a plural of biblical Ye'or, e.g., *Ytrw*, may have played a philologically misleading, associative role). Other suggestions, such as the Jezreel Valley (western, Liverani 1998: 38 with bibliography in n. 109, probably based on Egypt's sending agrarian labor to Shunem; cf. p. 137; Na'aman 1996: 553 and n. 14, linking it to the toponym *ymwt* in the eastern Jezreel, and identifying it with lands across the Valley, with grain shipment from Acco) or the plain of Sharon, have conformed to the pattern, and occasional associations with the northern Shephelah and the EB metropolis of Yarmuth or some equivalent place name are sometimes made (see generally Rölli 1976–80; Albright 1922: 320).

Yet, the link between Yarimuta and Byblos's grain supply is not necessarily quite as simple as these references would seem to imply. First, there is the issue of supply itself. Perhaps clearest in the sequence is the letter EA 68. Here, Rib-Addi declares,

Through the king's commissioner [the term, equated in EA 131: 21; 254: 9 respectively to the Semitic participles *mālik* and *sōkin*, denotes the highest Egyptian official regularly in Canaan] in Šumur, Byblos lives. Look, Pahamnata, the king's commissioner who is in the town of Šumur knows the difficulty [the penalty] that is confronting Byblos. From the land of Yarimuta we live [or: draw sustenance]. (EA 68: 19–28)

This text must be taken together with several other references. Thus, in EA 86: 31ff., Rib-Addi asks that the grain formerly sent from Yarimuta to Šumur (Tell Kazel) be redirected to Byblos. Earlier, in EA 86, Rib-Addi expresses the hope that his addressee, Amanappa, will have a (speedy) royal audience. Urging Amanappa to bring archers to Amurru, from which Mitanni is draining resources, he relates,

look, you said, "Yanhamu sent [piles of?] grain to you." Didn't you hear? (EA 86: 15–17; cf. Na'aman 1996: 154)

The context permits the inference that goods were exchanged, and perhaps did not reach their destinations. Skins and silver seem to appear in the text. However, these lines are clearer:

of horse and wagons, but stands in need of drivers, and EA 107: 40–42, where Rib-Addi claims to have plenty of drivers and, in line with his other rhetoric, no horses or chariots.

Speak to [your lord] that to [his servant] be given the export of the land of Yarimuta as it was formerly given to the town of Şumur and we will live until the king takes account of his town, and lo, for three years I have been ra[tioned/robbed] of our grain. There is nothing to sell for [horses . . . (so Moran 1992: 158f.)] . . . from the land of [Yarimuta] let grain be given for [our] eating. (EA 86: 31–40)

Not altogether dissimilar is a statement in EA 85. In this long text, some of which is cited above, Rib-Addi relates:

When Yanhamu said, “I have given grain to Rib-Addi and I g[ave . . . X . . .] grain of 40 men,” what did he give to me, when I deposited the payment for them with Yapah-Addi [of Beirut]? Indeed, Puhiya is with you, ask him and he will relate all to you. Further, let it be seemly to the king my lord that the grain export of the land of Yarimuta that formerly was given to the town of Şumur be given now to the town of Byblos and we will derive sustenance until you attend to your town. (EA 85: 23–39)

There is further discussion of Yanhamu taking silver for the men of Byblos into the land of Yarimuta while Yapah-Addi, it appears, is in discussion with ‘Abdi-Ashirta, perhaps in Beirut (85: 39–50), possibly as a way of short-circuiting what will become a drawn-out legal and occasionally logistical conflict with Yapah-Addi in Beirut (on which, see Na’aman 1996).

All this means is that the Egyptian administrative center at Şumur (Tell Kazel) was supplied from Yarimuta, just as the Egyptian forces at Byblos were—whether foreign or domestic in origin. For the local population, the king had to pay for his supplies. Still, Rib-Addi could relate:

you placed me in the hand of Yanhamu and he should provide grain for eating to me. I will guard the king’s town for him, so let the king speak and send my man. His people clamor at me day and night, “you gave our son to the king,” so dispatch him (back), him. A second man of the town of Ibirta, lo, is in Yanhamu’s house. Further, tell Yanhamu, “Lo, Rib-Addi is your responsibility and what happens to him is your fault.” (EA 83: 30–42)

That is, Yanhamu is responsible for getting grain to Rib-Addi from Yarimuta, as formerly it went to Şumur (and may still have been going there, especially at moments when the town was in Egyptian hands). The implication of coastal shipping is inescapable. What is more, Yapah-Addi, at Beirut, received Rib-Addi’s payment to be transferred for the goods from Yarimuta.

What emerges is as follows. In the correspondence, Rib-Addi denies he can get supplies from Şumur, because forces north of him such as Ullasa are turned, though the Aziru crowd are inland. He cannot arrange logistical transfers under his own flag from Yarimuta because Beirut interdicts his ships. So, Yarimuta is reached by ship, and most likely sends its own stocks to Şumur for redistribution to other places with mayors subject to the latter’s commissioners. It is in this light that EA 68: 19–28, cited above, should be read.

But it is not just food that arrives at Şumur and Byblos from Yarimuta: It is silver and clothing. EA 82 is addressed to Amanappa, an Egyptian regent and, perhaps, sometimes commissioner—certainly an official with access to pharaonic audiences (as EA 74: 51). In this letter, Rib-Addi complains of other mayors’ collaboration

with ‘Abdi-Ashirta, and then relates that Amanappa had asked that he send a man with him to the palace; if the request for an expeditionary (archer) army was not granted, Amanappa promised to send a bodyguard (82: 15–20). Despite the writer’s express reservations, Amanappa also instructed Rib-Addi repeatedly (82: 20–27) as follows:

send a ship to the land of Yarimuta and silver and clothing will go out to you from them. (EA 82: 28–30)

Meanwhile, however,

the men whom you gave me have fled, all of them. My loss is your debt. (EA 82: 31–33)

Lo, you have been idle toward me [Moran 1992: 152 “if you neglect me,” as a continuation of the previous clause]: look, I obeyed; didn’t I send my man to the palace, but he [i.e., ‘Abdi-Ashirta] spoke to a man and the latter stood with a bronze dagger against me. (EA 82: 33–38)

In other words, Amanappa’s bodyguard deserted, possibly to Şumur, leaving Rib-Addi exposed to attempted assassination. The connection may well be to Amanappa’s visit, which triggered ‘Abdi-Ashirta’s enmity (79: 8–12). Probably, Ammanappa’s retainers boarded the ship to Yarimuta, and disappeared with the payment; Rib-Addi did what he was told, but the men he was given to send fled. This implies he sent men with an authorization for supplies, or something else tangible, plus the ship.

Now the ship has not come back (Moran, may not come back) with goods from Yarimuta. It is the nature of these goods, in this letter, that merits attention: silver and clothing, materials used in fact to pay for getting information, and perhaps the Egyptian commander Haia, into Şumur from Byblos in EA 112: 43–50. Similarly, Amanappa and Haia apparently took copper and possibly other supplies along with them when leaving Şumur in EA 109: 62–64. It bears note that Rib-Addi relates, in a letter to Amanappa himself (EA 77), that Byblos has no copper and *s/šinnu* to send, since he, Rib-Addi, had shipped the latter to Tyre for provisions (77: 6–15 with Moran 1992: 147), with no implication of interdiction at Beirut.

There are two points that emerge from these considerations. First, Şumur is a point from which Egyptian provisions from Yarimuta are distributed, when it is functioning as a commissioner’s residence. These provisions *could* be diverted to Byblos, rather than altogether withheld or distributed instead, as the evidence may suggest, through Beirut or Tyre. This possibility, as noted, is the explicit basis of a request that Rib-Addi makes directly to the pharaoh in EA 85: 33–37 (*muša KUR yarimuta*), and also that he asks Amanappa to make in the royal court (EA 86: 31–37; also, as noted, 69: 19–28). It cannot be a coincidence that it is in the same letter that Rib-Addi asks (lines 48–50) that Yanhamu take the silver for the Byblians into the land of Yarimuta. Eventually, one letter informs us, Amanappa’s initially inadequate force was augmented sufficiently to retake Şumur and, eventually, ‘Abdi-Ashirta himself (117: 23–28). The functioning of this commissioner’s town, or at least Egyptian garrison town, was of central moment for fending off Hittite and earlier Mitannian inroads from Byblos, and for keeping Amurru at least neutral in

the international arena (but cf. EA 101). The number of Amurru letters written from Şumur and Irqata (Goren et al. 2004: 125) indicate the extension of that kingdom—despite Aziru’s protestations about the Hittite threat in Nuhasse to Tunip (as 166: 21–29)—to the coast.³ Reining Aziru in from control of Şumur was of the essence not just for maintaining control and neutrality further north, but for Byblos’s security from logistical pressures in general.

Second, one crucial intermediary for Rib-Addi’s obtaining supplies for troops furnished by the pharaoh and, by purchase, for his own local (fighting) population, is Beirut. However, it appears that Tyre could fulfill the same role (at least in EA 77). That is, the transshipment of supplies—grain, silver, garments—depends on coastal shipping to the south. This is why Rib-Addi’s legal contretemps with Yapah-Addi (*yp^c-hd*) at Beirut assumes such importance. The import of Yapah-Addi’s role is apparent not just in EA 82 and 85: 42, but also in the other texts emphasizing explicitly and less explicitly the importance of settling the dispute with him. Of these texts, 105: 31ff. in particular, along with 113: 8ff., 47–49; 114: 6ff., 51–69; 116: 21–50; 117: 24ff.; 119: 43–59, emphasize details of the case and Yanhamu’s role in it. They in particular stress the urgency of appointing Yanhamu as adjudicator of the dispute, and should be connected, likely, to the texts requesting his installation as commissioner at Şumur itself (106: 35–40; 109: 39; cf. 105: 80ff.; 106: 18–21). Here the issue of personal prestige stemming from his control of Yarimuta must be involved in Yanhamu’s being drafted. Notably, the case of Amanappa’s earlier arrival at Şumur as a prelude to a full-scale campaign to subdue ‘Abdi-Ashirta in the past is cited in one of these pleas as a precedent pertinent to dealing with the sons of ‘Abdi-Ashirta (117: 23–28).

Most notably, the defection of Ullasa, and the retreat of the Egyptians formerly manning the port there to Byblos, makes it impossible for Rib-Addi to send ships north for supplies because of a blockade by Arwad (EA 105: 31ff.). This fact has to be taken in the context of the claim that the ships of Byblos cannot reach Ugarit for boxwood (*taskarinnu*), due to Aziru’s opposition—which, in sea-borne terms, must be connected to the perfidy of Arwad (126: 4–28; 114: 51–69). Rib-Addi translates all this into a conspiracy of Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre with Amurru directed against him—and him alone, since Rib-Addi never accuses more southern Phoenician kings of a general alliance with Amurru—reaching Şumur (114: 6ff.; also 112: 41–50; 116: 50–52, naming Beirut only; 116: 67–77). Naturally, Aziru’s own letters promise the wood (as 160: 14; 161: 56), apparently in plenty.

That Beirut and Sidon and Tyre are cited as Aziru’s allies against Byblos has long been understood to show that they are points along the line of supply. The latter might in more peaceable or at least stable times bypass Byblos and be redistributed from Şumur. That is to say, shipments of various goods for Egyptian garrisons—known to have been stationed in Ullasa, Arwad, and Byblos as well as Şumur, the first three at least from time to time—went from some source to Yarimuta to Şumur.

3. Abimilki of Tyre, who sees Sidon’s Zimredda as the instigator in the alliance of Sidon, Amurru, and Arwad, also speaks of ships under Aziru’s command (149: 57–70; 151: 66–67). Rib-Addi never ascribes a navy to Amurru, however, insisting that he combined from the landward side with enemies located on the coast.

It appears that grain for native Byblians, and likely for royal employees at other dependent towns, was purchased for shipment along with the shipments to Şumur (cf. 114: 33–44). Interestingly, when he observes that his relations with Yapah-Addi compelled him to send Amanmasha to the pharaoh from Alashiya (114: 51–53), it is to indicate that he is using Cyprus as a food source rather than Şumur and Yarimuta.

Formerly, (it was) from the land Yarimuta (that) my retainers (*hupšīya*, Ug. *hṽpt*, cf. CAT 2.72.12–16) were supplied (*tuballitūna*), but now Yapah-Addi does not permit them to go for the supplies for the garrison men. (114: 54–60)

This is of course why the *hupšū* are defecting. Amanmasha's detour can only have to do with the indirect satisfaction of this constantly pressing need. The first stinger in this simple passage is that not even the Egyptian garrison can be supplied, on account of the blockade. Invoking Cyprus, and probably by implication the tolls and fees that resulted from conducting commerce through its offices, possibly including the potential for contact with Ugarit and Hatti, had two rhetorical valences: overtly, it recorded the employment of a way around Yapah-Addi's blockade at least until the latter could be broken or lifted; implicitly, it imposed not-so-subtle pressure on Egypt to work toward a resolution of the dispute with Beirut (again, Na'aman 1996). That it *would* be resolved, Rib-Addi had no doubt (117: 64–71; 118: 6–15, 50–55; 119: 43–59 with another intermediary, 'Abdi-Addi; cf. 83–86; 102–5). He expected that the "wise" and "beloved" Yanhamu would adjudicate it (106: 35–40; 109: 37). But the fact that he spends the time to inventory in detail the vessels in Yapah-Addi's possession (EA 120), including the character and weight of the presumed bill of lading and its value, is sufficient indication that he expected a specific settlement. Thus, Yapah-Addi is interdicting his supplies from Yarimuta, so he needs the disposition of the case to defend Şumur (116: 21–27), which is to say, to preserve the status quo in the northern empire. All the same, in reality, the texts show that the level of income, or at least the wealth in reserve for this purpose, is fairly steady at Byblos. This will be of some moment below.

We thus know that goods shipped from Yarimuta were accessible by sea, and could be cut off by sea. Yarimuta had a key port town, or towns, on the coast. Second, we can be reasonably confident that Yanhamu disposed of its goods. Yanhamu's presence in the south, even during the period of Aziru's taking over the area up to Byblos, is sufficiently attested to establish that his base was there: see, e.g., EA 215; 256; 270–71; 283–86; 289; 296; 330 (on 296, see Albright 1922: 320).

Yet Yarimuta never appears in a letter sent from any location but Byblos, and all attempts to find it in extrinsic literature have come to nought (as Moran 1992; Röhlig 1976–80; but cf. also Albright 1952: 25 with a land of Yarumtu near Beth Shean; similarly Na'aman 1996: 154 n. 15). Nor do we have a single letter from Yanhamu to the pharaoh or to a vassal king, an omission that cannot be incidental, particularly in that Biryawaza, the commissioner of Kumidi, is at least occasionally a correspondent. The two facts together imply (1) that Yanhamu had virtually unimpeded access to the court, or its immediate surrogate—a fact that is of course confirmed by the repeated request, not just by Rid-Addi (as 131: 62; 132: 29–30), that the pharaoh ask Yanhamu for intelligence; and (2) that Yarimuta itself, though not a town

and perhaps not even a production zone of any note, since it functioned chiefly as an entrepot for shipment, was not likely to be cut off from vassals south of Byblos, although Beirut apparently required the collusion of Tyre and Sidon to effectuate its embargo. It bears special note that the towns from which we have no letters to the court in our particular archive are the southern Egyptian colonies, namely, Jaffa and Gaza, as well as towns inside Egypt proper.

Indeed, in this respect, a few letters provide key indications. When, after the death or removal of Yapah-Addi, Rib-Addi takes refuge with Ammunira in Beirut, he no longer speaks in terms of relief from Yarimuta (formerly, again, it was Beirut that prohibited access to it, because of his legal dispute with Yapah-Addi). But in his latest communications, Rib-Addi speaks of a threat to Kumidi, materializing from Aziru and his brothers: just as his father, Ha'ip/Haapi, alienated the towns and turned Şumur over to (Rib-Addi's) enemies, without reinforcements from southern Egypt, Pahuru is doomed: the reinforcements must be led by Yanhamu (131–32), who is himself precisely *not* in danger, just as no vassal along the coast south of Beirut seems to be. Here, 116: 61ff. deserve special attention:

Look, your father did not go forth, nor survey the lands or his governors, (63) and now the gods and Shamash and the Lady of Byblos have granted that you sit on the throne of your father's house [dynasty] over your land. (67) Who are they, (these) sons of 'Abdi-Ashirta, that they take the land of the king for themselves? (Are they) the king of Mitanni or the king of Kasshi or the king of Hatti? Let the king send an expeditionary army of Yanha[mu] together with the (Egyptianized) responsible subordinates (Inspectorate)⁴ of the land Yarimuta and the commissioner of Kumidi (with him).

Unfortunately, the context does not permit us to speculate whether the commissioner at Kumidi, here probably Pahuru, opposes or can be expected to support the mission. The latter had dispatched, it seems, Suteans to kill several Sherden, and arrest three men with purely Semitic names and relations in Byblos (85: 35ff.; 122: 32ff.; 123: 21–37; 124: 61); and yet, one cannot escape the impression that again one is dealing with a legal problem between Rib-Addi and his contemporaries, rather than with outright confrontation. Regardless, the text clearly places our endangered commissioner of Kumidi, whom Rib-Addi accuses at times of inaction or even poor judgment about Şumur and lands between, beneath our ubiquitous and inevitably victorious Yanhamu with the expeditionary (archer) army. It is not clear from the context whether the commissioner is part of the inspectorate (finance office?) of Yarimuta or holds high office in it, or indeed is separate from it altogether, with officials of his own. Probably, however, Yanhamu could command from and allocate to the region such resources as were available.

It is striking, nonetheless, that sometimes Rib-Addi requests a joint operation without addressing the difference in either's security (as 117: 53ff.; after 117: 23–28; further, 118: 46ff.). Especially enlightening is 129: 75ff., in which the king of Hatti and sons of 'Abdi-Ashirta collude without reaction from Biryawaza, killing

4. *Qīpānī*, per Weber, VAB 2.1593, followed by Moran 1992 ad loc. The basic meaning is the subordinates of Yanhamu (or the Egyptian commissioner) who serve as emissaries to the towns in the latter's assigned territory: They are the authorities responsible for what is and what is not accomplished in the way of provision and measures taken as ordered. Cf. CAD Q.

Pahuru (Piwari) and taking Şumur (cf. 124: 39ff. with Moran 1992; though Moran denies the connection, Pintore's [1973: 305–6] relation of the event to 119: 18ff. is compelling; also, probably, 149: 67): the king, therefore, should instruct his *rab* to intervene. The same thread of thought continues in 131: 62; 132: 29–30: appealing to Yanhamu who “is with you,” Rib-Addi warned him against the trap into which Pahuru fell (along with his father, Ha’ip/Haapi). The result now, however, is that Aziru has forced the gods, for the first time ever, to abandon Byblos permanently (EA 134).

Critical to the discussion is the fact that the Inspectorate in which Yanhamu’s army is stationed in the land of Yarimuta. This demarcates it as an extensive region, with civilian officials higher than mayors (Holloway 2001: 326–27) who enforced military commissions on those with troops or military resources to hand (like the chariotry made available to Surata at Acco, a fact of which Rib-Addi is jealous), and acted in the disposition of Egyptian funding and support. The region, Yarimuta, must have enjoyed *reasonably* pacific local conditions, unaffected by foreign embroglios. The term *inspector* (comptroller, overseer) is rare at Amarna. One time, interestingly, Aziru requests that the king appoint him in this capacity once he has rebuilt Şumur (159: 43–46); the other clear passage has these officials assaying and sealing gold to send from Egypt to Babylon (7: 66–72).

There are only two regions that meet the criteria for Yarimuta in their entirety: the Delta itself, presumably at Memphis—to which Rib-Addi does explicitly compare Byblos (84: 37; 139: 8)—and the southern coastland of Canaan, with a focus at Gaza or at Jaffa, and bases at both. In either case, the ability to call on a hinterland’s wealth is presupposed. So possibly the hinterland is quite extensive, including especially parts of the hills not attached to a particular city-state. It is of some moment, in fact, that one of Yapah-Addi’s two letters (EA 97), concerning the release of a captive from Egyptian custody and quite possibly having to do with his own legal wrangling with Rib-Addi, derives from the region of Gaza or possibly Jaffa (Goren et al. 2004: 162).

Is this, as one indeed might expect, the extent to which a vassal needed to go in order to make an official appearance at the “court”? The remonstrance issued to the king of Taanach in the letters found at that site (Halpern 2000: 543–45) for a failure to meet an Egyptian official in Gaza suggests at a minimum a precedent for such an expectation. However, Aziru apparently writes from Gaza (EA 168; Goren et al. 2004: 112–13) or its vicinity (Ashkelon?) of his own imminent arrival, with the Egyptian lictor Hatip, virtually under arrest, at the court itself. That the letter promises an arrival at Akhetaten proper is surely most likely; and yet, one thinks of the possibility of Memphis or even Gaza itself. Nor should the case of Aziru be taken as a common one: he is bringing with him renegades listed in a document entitled “names of the enemies of the king,” which may include one of his closest associates.⁵

5. 162: 76, Baaluma; 165: 9, Baaluya; identified with one another by Weber already in VAB 2: 1268, 1270, and 1566 (index); while their identity is not transparent, it seems highly probable. In favor of a construction of a tablet entitled “Names of the Enemies of the King” are two factors.

Most tellingly, Rib-Addi reports that his counsellors urge him to seek refuge and aid in Jaffa itself.

When it is said in the king's presence, "That one to the town, Yaffo, with him, he was finished; he is (will be?) strong, and like those others." (EA 138: 5–7; cf. Moran 1992: 221–23)

Rib-Addi affirms that he did appear before an official named Api (or, more likely, went through Upi—cf. 53: 27ff., 189 r 12; 197: 34, 42), but now the men of Byblos invite him back into the town.⁶ The sequence of the argument in this letter—and with Rib-Addi, all history is subpoenaed to serve the argument, whatever the circumstances—is that he had withstood 'Abdi-Ashirta alone when the latter threatened Šumur (and, of course, supplies to Byblos sent through it). And, indeed, when Aziru took Šumur, his Byblians saw and rose up:

For how long should we resist [present a hard front against, *kšš: see *kašāšu CAD K 286b*] the son of 'Abdi-[Ashirta]? {Our?} silver [is exhausted?] through fighting (cf. Moran 1992: 223), and they turned on me and I smote them. (EA 138: 37–39)

When the Byblians, however, taxed him, "How long will you smite us? ["smite" here meaning perhaps corporal compulsion and attacks rather than implying deaths], Where will you get population to dwell in the town?" he sent—as usual without success—for troops from the center (EA 138: 40–44). As the official classes, along with Rib-Addi's own brother, joined Aziru apparently without regarding themselves as in revolt against Egypt (138: 44–50), he made off for aid from Ammunira in Beirut; but the residents, noting the admission of Aziru's troops to the town and Rib-Addi outside with a relief force, turned on the brother and his allies (138: 51–70). Not terribly oddly, the preserved letters of Rib-Addi do not include the one in which he reports having implored Aziru for readmission to the town (as EA 162), for a high price.

Rib-Addi reckons that, with effective partisans inside Byblos, he deserves the courtesy due from the pharaoh to a ruler of a town, not the four-month detention his son has suffered for an audience (138: 71–81; the four months relate to those in line 23). His next coherent argument is:

why have you with[held . . .] lands of Yaffo? Why have you [. . .] to me when [you knew that Byblos was] a loyal town and [. . .] when I dwelt in Beirut, no man of the

First, the syntax of the sentence "lo, the king your lord has had brought to you *šu-mu ša LÚ.MEŠ a-ia-(bi)-e ša LUGAL*" demands an oblique plural ending on the first noun, whereas the latter stands in the nominative, suggesting that the phrase, rather than the word, "names," is being construed as the object of the verb (162: 61–62; and cf. the plural oblique object in 162: 58, "let me have the king's enemies brought," the latter with no determinative before "enemies"). Second, "the names of the enemies of the king" is brought "on a tablet through the agency of Hanni, the king's agent." There is nothing to indicate that Hanni is also the bearer of the current tablet, which twice demands the remission of the culprits named, and then names them; it glosses the last name with "he is a robber in the land, Amurru," suggesting that the others occupied more official positions, including that of "pa3 m ḥry - man" or "supervisor/officer" (162: 74), which may be either Pishyari or, should the two not be identical (which remains a possibility despite the seeming repetition about the "sons"), the in-law of Manya.

6. In 138: 14 there may be a repetition of the notorious AN.DA.MU- (here, *-šu*, there *-ia*) of EA 84:33, on which, see the comments of Mettinger 2001; Smith 2001 to Moran 1992: 156.

king my lord [came . . .] and the town (Byblos) said, “Where is the man who has come from the lands of Egypt before him?” so they joined Aziru. (138: 84–93)

In other words, the lands of Yaffo and the lands of Egypt are functionally equated here in terms of aid. What is more, it is the absence of such support—as the support from Yarimuta—that has turned, as Rib-Addi predicted, Byblos into Aziru’s ally.

Rib-Addi rehearses again and tirelessly the point that this would never have come to pass had the king only listened and sent him forces (138: 94–105). (Rib-Addi is not a man afraid to point out, “I told you so.”) His brother, he says, has given over the treasures of the town (138: 105–7 partly with Moran 1992: 222)—probably those of the gods (109: 21; 137: 60ff., 74f.). Significantly, he appears himself to have offered this otherwise unmentioned wealth to Aziru, a point that will disturb the pharaoh (EA 162: 3–6). A repetition of the accusation follows, about the brother claiming he was dead, about his having partisans, and so on. And then he begins the clinching point of this letter: The people keep petitioning him,

“Where are the days when the king, your lord, sent to you? Where are the troops when they (were?) sent to you,” and Yaffo (Moran 1992: 223, “a nice thing”) \ a desideratum (*hamudu*) that was distributed (*šabir*) from the king is not given to me for my city: grain is withheld \ stopped (cf. line 80: held up). And what has Ammunira been saying? How long have I stayed with him, and the king must give troops so that sons of Treacherous (a pun on Ashratum) not enter the town, and seize Beirut, so that there would be no lands for the king my lord. (138: 121–35)

Without placing too much emphasis on the wordplay in this text, it is clear that Yaffo is identified with grain shipments that, like the audience due Rib-Addi’s son, have been stopped up. It is the lands, plural, of the king, that pertain to Yaffo, just as to Egypt (thus the dispatch from there of corvée labor to Shunem). There will be no lands, plural, left, if the king does not act and send an army. Rib-Addi could himself have gone, the letter starts, on the advice of his partisans *at the court* to Yaffo, to regain his strength, gather an army, and confront the sons of ‘Abdi-Ashirta, but stopped short, perhaps not of mobilizing support at Kumidi (Upi), under threat repeatedly from Qadesh and Aziru, but of traveling down the coast further than would have left his partisans in the town any hope of a speedy return and their own being saved, probably from slavery and death.

Again, what is Yaffo, desirable, grain, is what has been stopped from reaching Byblos, so that the converse relationship of one not reaching the other holds. And of course, what is desirable is what has been distributed (*šabir*) by the king, a relationship played on (*šeber/bār* for the provision of grain) in the Joseph story.

ya-pu \ ha-mu-du ša ša-bi-ir from the king my lord is not given to me, to my town; grain is withheld/halted (*i-ka-al \ ha-zi-ri*, the latter representing *‘šr?).

The town, Yaffo, occurs in other texts. In EA 294: 18–24, it is the home to a royal “house,” or perhaps storehouse or compound, that men are drafted to guard from elsewhere; the writer in the instance complains that a local officer, Biya son of Gulatu, has diverted the troops he sent for royal service there. In 296: 33, one writer claims that, having served as a child or youth in guarding the gate of the king’s palace (?) in Egypt, he now guards, or has guarded, the gate of Gaza and of

Jaffa. He appeals to Yanhamu as a witness to the veracity of his report, specifically, that he travels wherever the expeditionary (archer) army goes. According to rough petrographic analysis (Goren et al. 2004: 292f.), the clay from the tablet originates in the coastal area from Jaffa to the south, and the analysts prefer Ashdod as the point of origin for historical reasons, which are, however, flawed. The chances are strong that the same scribe, in EA 292, refers to another diversion of local resources by Biya son of Gulatu, on behalf of an army moving out from Egypt or Gaza. It bears note that EA 365 attests the use of *corvée* workers in the Jezreel Valley from this region, especially from Jaffa but also from Nuribta (whose identification with Arubboth and Roman Narbata by A. Zertal is challenged in Na'aman 2000). Possibly, Taanach Letter 1, which refers to Rubutu (versus the usual Rahaba for Rehob), connects the interior of the coastal region with the Egyptian administrative center at Gaza and the Jezreel.⁷

In light of all this, Albright's inclination to infer that Yanhamu administered Yarimuta, the area, from Gaza to Jaffa (1922: 320 based on EA 296), does not sound at all farfetched (although, following VAB 2, he places Yapah-Addi in the same area). Indeed, the author of EA 296 makes a fine candidate for one of the inspectors whom Rib-Addi urges Yanhamu to mobilize from that territory, as do the Egyptian officers named, if plaintively, in EA 292. References to a ruler seizing property, too, in preparation for the king's army, and especially to seizing people, are more common in the south than in the north (as 292: 26–40). There also seems in the south to be a plethora of “commissioners.” We have the plural “commissioners” to whom ‘Abdi-Heba appeals as witnesses in his contretemps with the Nubian contingent in his town (287: 29–36, 71–76); Shuta (EA 288: 19); a character with a similar mission (not necessarily title) whose name does not survive (288: 17); Maya (EA 216: 13; 217: 16,22; 218: 14, from near Gaza, Goren et al. 2004: 310; and 337: 26,29 placed in the Bashan by Goren et al. 2004: 219; see VAB 2: 1297), whose territory includes Jerusalem and Gezer (300: 26) and the Shephelah down to Lachish (328: 24), and who in ‘Abdi-Heba's view enjoys the power to install his own “(sub-?)commissioners” (292: 20–35); Pawuru (likely a title), who allegedly stabilized Jerusalem when the garrison under Hayya son of Miyare was withdrawn by Addaya to his house at Gaza (289: 30–35), at Yanhamu's orders (below: see 287: 40–52; 289: 38–40). In asking for a new commissioner, ‘Abdi-Heba cites his tribute (287: 53–59); he does the same in connection with paying a commissioner in 288: 17–22 in advance of launching his complaint. A further unnamed character accompanies Yanhamu to Egypt (283: 27–29, contra the identification of the two in Moran 1992), while Re-

7. The historical geography here is complex. However, all lines of inquiry converge on the identification of Rubutu in Egyptian topographical lists and the district system of Solomon with some site leading from the Sharon and Socoh there to Taanach, and thus very likely at the entrance to or in a dominating position in the Dothan Valley. Ideally, one would seek such a site at the mouth of a pass either in the southwest or in the northeast of the valley, as Na'aman, for example, does. Within these constraints, its precise location is not material to the discussion here as numerous candidate locations can be found. A connection to the Roman district of Narbata (Arbattoi) in the toparchy of Caesarea would, however, tend to favor a southwestern location for the site, whether at the entry to the valley or just inside it. This would hardly violate the sense of the other evidence.

anap acts as the commissioner over Gath and the (Shephelah) region south of Gezer (292: 36–40). To these, we may perhaps add Beya, to name a few.⁸ It is true that the last is accused of offering to return manpower for ransom (292: 49–52). However, this practice, attested also in 109: 28–29 and 114: 8–9, is essentially a variant on the sort of deposit (2,000 sheqels plus family) that Yanhamu himself allegedly demands of Milki-Ilu (EA 270: 9–23). Yanhamu too seems to reallocate Egyptian troops, as from Jerusalem (286: 25–28). Likewise, ‘Abdi-Heba is said to have offered silver to the men of Keilah to defect to him from Gath (280: 16–24; cf. 279: 10–15, and surprisingly not from Gezer, but Goren et al. 2004: 280–86). Nor does every commissioner dispose of an expeditionary army with archers (so 288: 57–61).

In other words, the sheer concentration of resources, including materials other than grain, and their constant requisitioning and reallocation points to southern Canaan as the location of Yarimuta and Yanhamu’s most active subalterns, many of them with the rank of “commissioner.” Probably, this region excludes the area of Kumidi to the north, but includes—as manpower from the south is sent for *corvée* agriculture to Shunem—the broad lands of the Jezreel Valley, administered from Yaffo. The only realistic alternative is the Delta, and the failure to refer to it as “Egypt” in any context, rather than Yarimuta, is compelling evidence against the identification. One peculiarity, however, that resists easy explanation is the pharaoh’s claim, in 162: 12–14, that Rib Addi had found residence in Sidon (as well as Beirut), despite the clear problem that the pharaoh would have preferred that Aziru denounce Rib-Addi for appealing to Aziru for a return to Byblos (162: 15–18).

The other problem is of course the etymology or at least attestation of the term Yarimuta. Against a derivation from any simply yaqtul verbal formation is the consistent presence of the vowel, and its consistent identity, in the second syllable (but Albright’s Seti I Yarumtu-region!). While Tropper has argued for a -0 case for toponyms and personal names ending in -a in early Semitic (Tropper 2001), the consistency of Yarimuta’s spelling argues against variation there. The same holds for the other vowels generally. The idea of an abstractive affirmative -ūt- on a finite (prefix) verbal form is unappealing, as is the idea of a primary root *rwm*—a geminate would be slightly preferable if one were parsing the first element of the word as a prefix-conjugation verb. An original root **wrm* (as Koehler-Baumgartner 2006: 419) is possible (a swelling of the ground), and indeed one does encounter the toponym Yarmut—even if without the -i- in the second syllable or the -a at the end; cf. Albright 1952, *Yarumtu*). But this root biform, which has the advantage of avoiding the verbal interpretation, and the defect of leaving us with a meaning most likely of “high groundedness,” is attested only much later, in classical Arabic. One is left, in the end, with the probability that etymology will not help resolve the location of the region, whether it is a swelling of the ground or not, or identify the preeminent port, or arguably ports, from which its supplies were shipped.

8. One wonders about Baiawa (215–16, the latter from Gaza according to Goren et al. 2004: 273) and Beya (292: 41–52; 294: 16–26), who seems to be requisitioning work-gangs and soldiers for legitimate purposes, as seems also to be the case with Yanhamu. He is likely another. For Beya ransoming his “captives,” compare also 109: 28–29; 114: 8–9.

All that said, it is well to remember too that Byblos was far from devoid of resources when it expelled Rib-Addi at the end. In a crucial passage, he implores the pharaoh to seize the temple treasures and goods that remain there. In other words, his pleas for support are for support under a budgetary category, or budgetary categories, of particular sorts that did not extend to the accumulated weight of the city's divine treasures. These are precisely the goods he accuses his brother and successor of plundering—in EA 137: 60–62, he professes, the town is full of silver and gods, with tons in its temple (sg.), in addition to the goods of the king and his ancestors (EA 137: 73–75). This is the background of the claim, in EA 138: 106, that his brother stole treasures of Byblos to induce Aziru to install him there. It may also be the reason that the pharaoh's wrath in 162 (see lines 3–6) is reserved for Aziru's failure to report the installation, rather than the transition itself. The pharaoh tells Aziru that he has heard from Rib-Addi of the latter's plea to Aziru. But Aziru has violated his own oath of installation by

taking a mayor whose brother had cast him out through the gate from his city: and, while he resided at Sidon, you gave him to the mayors (fitting?) by your own lights. Didn't you know the enmity of the men? If you are in good faith the king's servant, why did you not denounce him before the king, your lord, saying, "This mayor has sent to me saying, 'Take me for yourself/to you and introduce me into my city.'" (EA 162: 7–18)

The text proceeds to remonstrate with Aziru for failing to relate the truth, for prevaricating to the pharaoh in this matter (162: 19–21). Notably, the assumption is that temple and palace goods belong in place, not plunder. The next subject is that of Aziru's relations with Qadesh: Either these remain friendly and Aziru is not loyal to the pharaoh, or he is no longer loyal to his former commitment. The punishment for violating the pharaoh's trust will be his death (by the pharaoh's "axe") and that of his entire clan (EA 162: 22–38). At that juncture, there is another transition in the rhetoric:

ù epuš ardūta ana šarri bēlika ù balṭātā
ù tēdi atta ki šarru lā haših
ana KUR kinahhi ki gabbāša ki i-ra-ú-ub (EA 162: 39–41)

But do service to the king, your lord, and (you will) live,
 For you do know that the king does not lack/is not lacked (*haših*)
 for (any of) the whole land of Canaan⁹ when he is angry/hungry (or: there is anger,
 hunger).

The pharaoh may mean not that the king does not forebear to attack Canaan when angered (Na'aman 1990: 404–5), nor that Canaan does not occasion his anger (Moran 1992: 251), but rather that the king does not require anything from Canaan when there is trouble—because he can call on all its resources. Here, the verb would be a participle, a suffix-conjugation *qatila*, or, in the sense of "to be in need," a

9. On the phrase *ana KUR Kinahhi gabbāša*, see Rainey 1996: 1.80, with the closest parallels coming from the Jerusalem letters (286: 35–36; 288: 24). The suffix is surprisingly rare in the letters.

stative. Unfortunately, *CAD* (s.v. *hašāhu*) cites only one text where the verb is paired with *ana* + noun—grain is needed “for seed”; *ana* + verbal infinitive is uniformly purposive—X is needed in order to do Y. Possibly, the current passage includes a pun on famine (W. Sem. *r(b)*), in the impersonal. The pharaoh can call on all the resources of Canaan, including Egyptian forces there, and supplies, such as those vassals prepare for expeditionary armies. Alternately, his argument may be that the pharaoh is not “wanted/needed” (stative) in (for) any of Canaan when there is turmoil. That is, he does not withhold himself from any of Canaan when difficulties arise (or even when he is angry). A like sentiment in a context calling for loyalty and connected with the semantic equivalent of the Akkadian verb *ḥsr* appears in Deut 2:7; 8:9 (cf. 1 Kgs 11:22; Judg 19:20; Pss 23:1; 34:10–11; and Deut 28:48, 57).

All in all, the evidence holds that Yarimuta is the countryside from which Yanhamu supplied both Egyptian and, for a price, native forces in coastal Syria. The evidence also holds that Yanhamu administered southern Canaan from Gaza and Jaffa, and mustered its resources, certainly at the time of Akhenaten and probably earlier. That Egyptian resources proper were being spent on the distant provinces seems positively unlikely. That Yanhamu, therefore, served as an intermediary in the imperial economy is all the more appealing as a possibility. In the circumstances, Yarimuta makes a plausible designation for the territory under Yanhamu’s authority, together with all its appointed Egyptian officers (*qēpānī*).

These would include those commanders expected to ride to the rescue of vassals. Shuwardata (EA 366: 40) describes a conflict with “the apiru,” who could possibly be Milki-Ilu of Gezer in combination with Tagi and the sons of Lab’ayu (see 289: 5–29 and the document found at Beth Shean, Horowitz 1994; 1996), in the neighborhood of Gath (Goren et al.; for activity in the area, see also 288: 41–46; and, also regarding Lachish [288], 333, which seems to involve an invitation from “the town, Yaramu”). He names ‘Abdi-Ḥeba, who styles himself both a “soldier” and a “king’s familiar”; Surata of Acco, whose chariotry allocation *from the court* excited Rib-Addi’s envy; and, Indaruta of Achshaph, whose status as a royal proxy is less certain. The first two are different from colleague-mayors: Acco, after all, was also the appointed station for Lab’aya’s extradition. Both Surata and Indaruta must traverse a distance to join the conflict. They come from the other geographical side, so to speak, of the axis confronting Shuwardata in the south. (It bears note that we have no evidence of an actual successor at Shechem: Was the territory redistributed on Lab’aya’s death?) Significantly, in the same letter, Shuwardata now asks for Yanhamu’s help (cf. EA 330: 13–16, in which the nearby Shipti-Ba’lu affirms the latter’s loyalty). One wonders whether, for Shuwardata and ‘Abdi-Ḥeba, the coalition in point is not the equivalent of Rib-Addi’s Yarimuta, as certainly seems implied by ‘Abdi-Ḥeba’s question as to what Gaza was otherwise for (289: 16–17, plus passim references, and Yanhamu’s disposition, as 289: 44–45).

As a name for Canaan from Acco southward, including Egyptian-administered valleys and hills in the latter, Yarimuta makes a good deal of sense. Its extent may well reach across the Shephelah and the Sharon and into the hills themselves. This was a territory with produce and trade goods, apparently in plenty (cf. Deut 8:9). It

was also capable of sending large quantities of goods, which were no doubt streaming south in any case through Egyptian administrative networks, into Egypt proper (as, among others, EA 301: 12–20 from Ashkelon, Goren et al. 2004: 294–99).

The land of Yarimuta, as Albright already divined in some sense (1922; but, 1952), was a hinterland from which Egyptian administrators, especially Yanhamu, could gather wealth into an Egyptian port. Jaffa springs to mind as such a port, as does Gaza. The situation with the ports is not contradictory or in any sort of tension. No one, it would seem, troubled ships flying under Cypriote or Egyptian command, although conflict among vassals was unremitting. And the local vassals fight again and again over resources in the interior. That said, Egypt clearly reserved areas of the interior for its own use, at least on a seasonal basis. Yarimuta is everything that falls into the latter catchment, and cannot be let out to the city-states. It is the part of Canaan that is not part of Canaan, the coastland or port (*ia-*, Egyptian *ʾiw*, Hebrew *ʾy*) of the highland (*rmy/m*) interior.

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Iron Age IIA Occupational Phases in the Coastal Plain of Israel

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Introduction

We are pleased to present this paper to David Ussishkin. For many years David has encouraged our study of the archaeology of the Beersheba Valley, of which the current research is a by-product.

Settlement patterns and pottery typology in the south and north of Israel enable distinction between Early and Late Iron Age IIA (IAIIA; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004, 2006). Both phases share the dominance of red-slipped and hand-burnished bowls and kraters, yet specific characteristics in other pottery types of each phase have also been noted. While the Early IAIIA was characterized by domestic villages, the Late IAIIA saw the appearance of fortified towns with monumental elite structures. A third, declining sub-phase was also observed in the north. Well stratified sites with rich pottery assemblages, such as Lachish, Arad, and Tel Beersheba in the south and Megiddo and Jezreel in the north, provide a sound basis for this occupational division. Chronological pegs in Arad and Jezreel offer absolute dates for this evolution, and establish solid ground for understanding the processes of state formation that led to the rise of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

The current paper attempts to apply a similar approach to the central coastal plain of Israel. Regrettably, in this case we were confronted by serious difficulties:

- Most of the IAIIA sites were either small or the exposed assemblages were meager, and much material is yet unpublished.
- Pharaoh Shishak I's campaign provides an important chronological peg for setting absolute dates for IAIIA strata in southern and northern Israel. However, the coastal sites are missing from this list,¹ either because they were not on the campaign route or because their names have not been preserved on the temple wall. Therefore, no occupational level can be dated by safe historical association.

Accordingly, we must compare the data from the coastal sites to that of the inland regions discussed in our earlier studies. We apply this method to the well-stratified

1. Many scholars reconstruct the name Gaza as the first name in the list since it was the Egyptian base from which Egypt's Levantine expeditions were launched (Kitchen 2001: 10). Yet, it is possible that this toponym should instead be identified with Gezer (Na'aman 1998: 252).

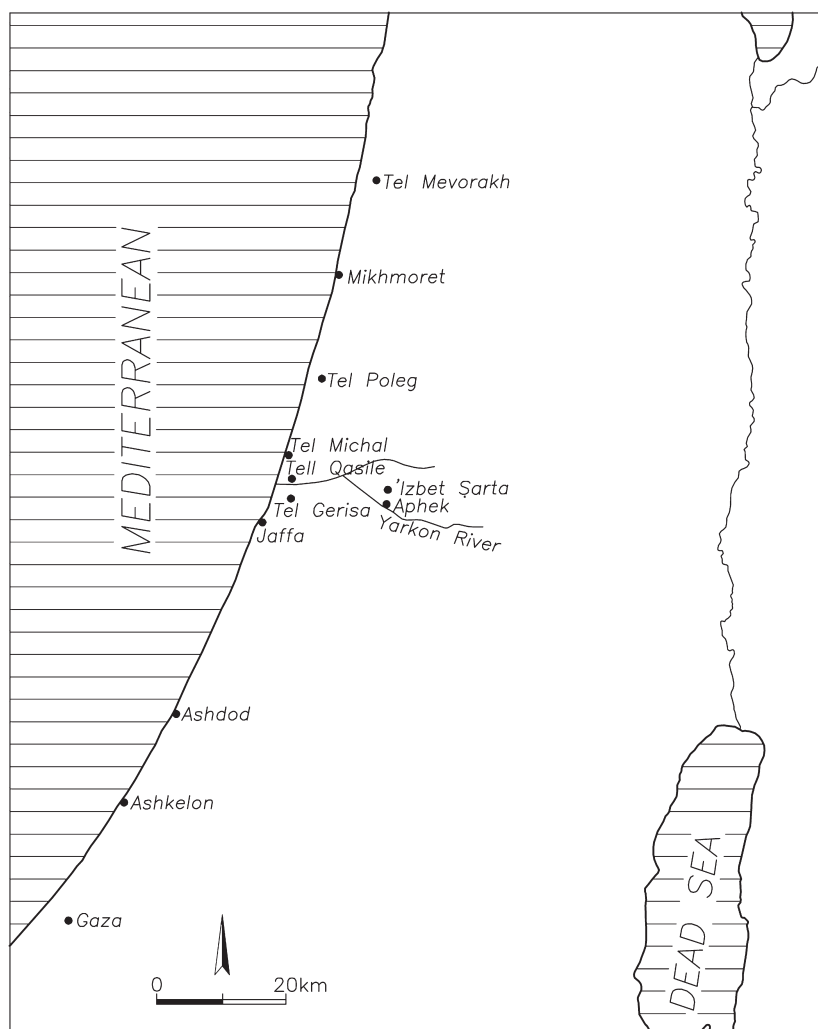


Fig. 1. Location of discussed sites in the central coastal plain.

sites such as Tel Mevorakh, Tel Michal, Tell Qasile, Tel Gerisa, Aphek, 'Izbet Şarḥah² and Ashdod. At some other sites, such as Tel Poleg (Singer-Avitz 1989b), Mikhmoret (Porath et al. 1993: 1044), Jaffa (Fantalkin 2005), and Ashkelon (Stager et al. 2008: 275), only fragmentary remains of walls or only pottery sherds are recorded.

Sites located farther to the north, such as Tell Keisan, Tell Abu-Hawam, and Dor seem to belong to a separate geographical/historical region—the Phoenician sphere of influence studied in detail by Gilboa (2001). We start our discussion with Tel Gerisa, where we present as yet unpublished material from our excavations. The remainder of the survey is arranged in geographical order from north to south.

2. For the cultural ascription of 'Izbet Şarḥah to the coastal plain and not to the hill country, see below.

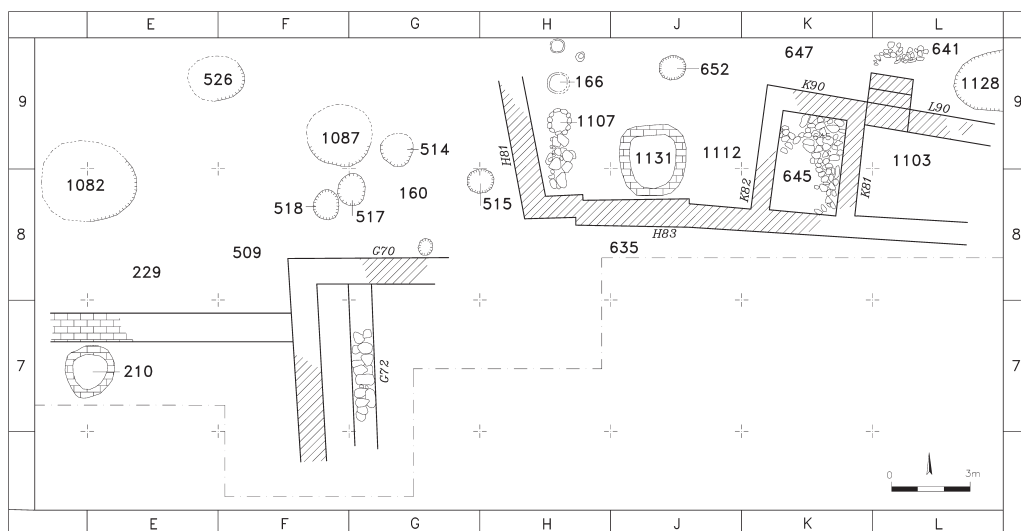


Fig. 2. Tel Gerisa, Plan of Stratum 4.

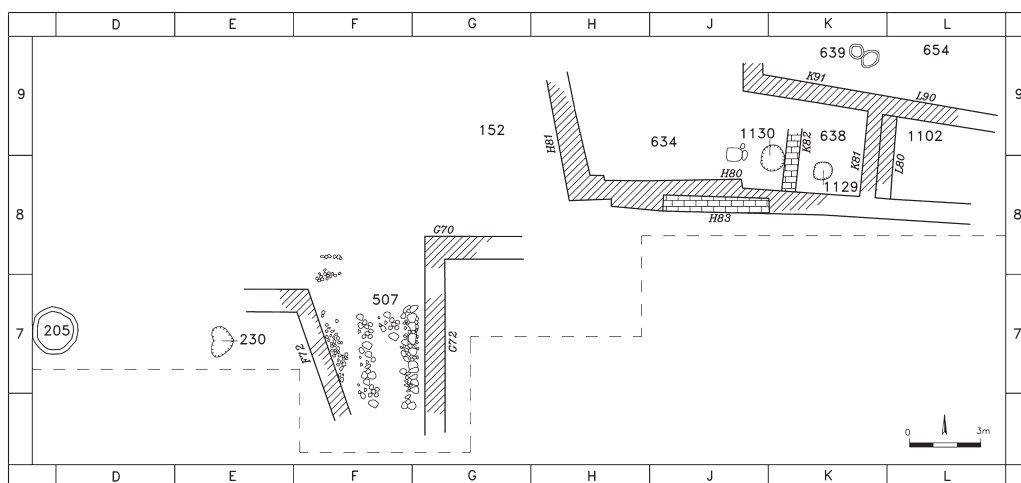


Fig. 3. Tel Gerisa, Plan of Stratum 3.

Tel Gerisa

The site is located on a natural hill at the confluence of the Yarkon and Ayalon Rivers, at the most inland navigable section of the former. It was first occupied in the Early Bronze Age, flourished as a fortified city in the Middle Bronze Age, and declined in the Late Bronze Age. The Iron Age occupation covered only a small part of the mound: During the Iron Age I, two separate farmsteads were erected at the northern and southern ends of the mound (Stratum 5); only the latter was resettled in the IAIIA (Herzog 1993). The new occupation in the IAIIA (Stratum 4) was

constructed over a leveled layer of gray earth fill. The remains of Stratum 4 consist of poorly preserved domestic structures. The eastern unit consists of two rooms (Loci 645, 1103) and large walled Courtyard 1112 on the west (Fig. 2). Many storage and refuse pits, as well as several ovens, were recorded both inside and outside the courtyard. In Stratum 3 (Fig. 3) the structures were reused in a similar manner.

The pottery collected in Strata 4 and 3 comes partly from floors and mostly from the storage and refuse pits. Since the material is as yet unpublished we present here assemblages of secure loci of these strata.

Bowls and Kraters (Figs. 4:1–4; 6:1–10)

Most of the bowls and kraters are red-slipped and hand-burnished. This surface treatment is applied inside and outside (in some cases the slip and burnish is applied outside only up to the carination line). In most cases the upper part of the bowl or krater is horizontally burnished. On the lower part of the inside the burnishing strokes are irregular.

Bowls with rounded-carinated, slightly everted walls (Figs. 4:1; 6:7–9). The rim is horizontal (and sometimes even the upper edge is slightly slanted). The bowls are red-slipped and hand burnished. These bowls are one of the characteristics of the Late IAIIA in Judah and are virtually absent in earlier assemblages (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004: 211, Fig. 3:1–2).

Kraters with a rounded carination and thickened rim (Figs. 4:4; 6:10). They have two loop handles and are red-slipped and hand-burnished.

Chalices (Figs. 4:5–8; 6:11–12)

Chalices with a shallow bowl. The bowl has a rounded carination and an everted rim. The high pedestal foot is usually stepped. These vessels are usually undecorated.

Cooking-Pots

Open cooking-pots have a wide variety of elongated ridged rims with slightly concave exterior surfaces (Figs. 4:9–12; 6:14–15). The ridge is sometimes less pronounced and the upper edge of the rim is rounded or pinched. They have two loop handles, a feature that was unknown in the previous Iron Age I strata.

Cooking-jugs (Figs. 4:13–14; 7:1–2). Jug-shaped vessel made of typical cooking-pot fabric. The vessel has a globular body and high vertical neck. One handle extends from the rim to the body. Most have a ring base. Soot marks (attesting to its use as cooking-pot) on the side opposite the handle and not on its base are noteworthy. This evidence may support the assumption that the heat source was not under the vessel as usual, but rather on the side. The presence of the ring base and the peculiar heating method of this type of cooking-jug apparently point to Aegean tradition (for a detailed discussion, see Ben-Shlomo et al. 2008). Two subtypes are known. The first subtype has a simple or slightly thickened and rounded rim (Fig. 4:13). The second subtype has a long, somehow pressed rim (Figs. 4:14; 7:1–2).

Jugs (Fig. 7:3)

Medium-sized jug with a long, wide neck, rounded rim, ridged body, and ring base. One loop handle is drawn from the rim to the body. The jug is red-slipped and vertically hand-burnished.

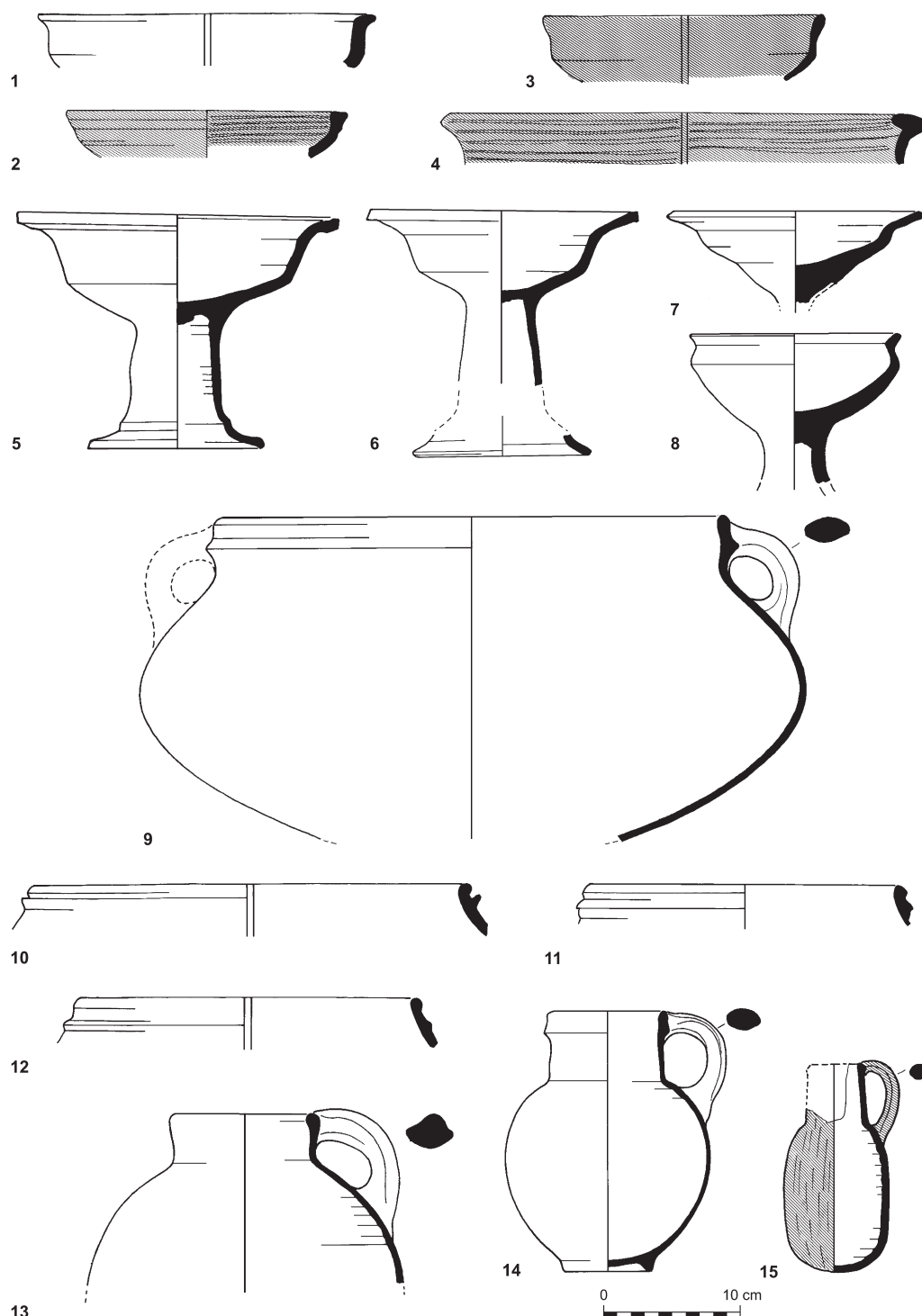


Fig. 4. Tel Gerisa, Pottery of Stratum 4.

Juglets (Fig. 4:15)

Dipper juglet with a wide neck. The body is elongated and the base is round. One loop handle is drawn from the rim to the sloping shoulder. The juglet is red-slipped and vertically burnished.

Storage Jars (Figs. 5:3–6; 7:4–6)

Carinated shoulder storage jars (Figs. 5:3; 7:4). The body widens downwards from the shoulder carination, narrowing near the bottom. The rim is short with a triangular section. A pair of loop handles extends from the shoulder carination. The early appearances of this jar can be seen at several sites throughout the country, such as Arad Stratum XI (Singer-Avitz 2002: Fig. 4:9), Tel Beersheba Stratum IV (Aharoni 1973: Pl. 55:19), Tel Michal Strata XIV–XIII (Singer-Avitz 1989a: Figs. 7.1:17–18; 7.3:14) and Jezreel (Zimhoni 1997: Fig. 2.11:5). This type continues to appear with variations until the end of the Iron Age.

Four-handle holemouth jars (Fig. 5:6). Storage jars with swollen body, ring base, and four loop handles drawn from the rounded shoulder to the body. The jars are neckless and have a thickened rim. This type is probably the predecessor of the popular holemouth jar of the Iron Age IIB.

Storage-jar with swollen body and a marked ridge around the neck (Fig. 5:4). This storage-jar is usually called the “hippo” storage jar.

Imports

Imported vessels are not common. There are isolated sherds of the Phoenician Bichrome Ware, and some sherds of the Cypriote Black-on-Red Ware (Fig. 5:1–2).

Summary

In the pottery assemblages of Strata 4 and 3 the red slip and hand burnish technique is very prominent. Pottery types that were known in the previous Iron Age I Stratum 5 are entirely absent.

When comparing the assemblages of Tel Gerisa to those of the southern and northern regions of the country, we may detect pottery types that are common only in the Late IAIIA and absent from the Early IAIIA, i.e., bowls with horizontal or slanted rims, storage jars with carinated shoulders, holemouth storage jars, “hippo” storage jars, and Cypriote Black-on-Red Ware.

The settlement of Strata 4–3 differs from that of its predecessor in the Iron Age I in all aspects: layout of houses and pottery typology. Assigning Strata 4–3 to the Late IAIIA, which we date to the 9th century B.C.E., indicates an occupational gap at Tel Gerisa during the Early IAIIA, in the second half of the 10th century B.C.E.

Tel Mevorakh

The small mound of Tel Mevorakh contains remains attributed to the Iron Age in two strata (VIII and VII). In each stratum a single building, surrounded by an enclosure wall, was partly exposed (Stern 1978). In Stratum VIII the remains consist of a rectangular structure that is interpreted as a podium, with its superstructure almost

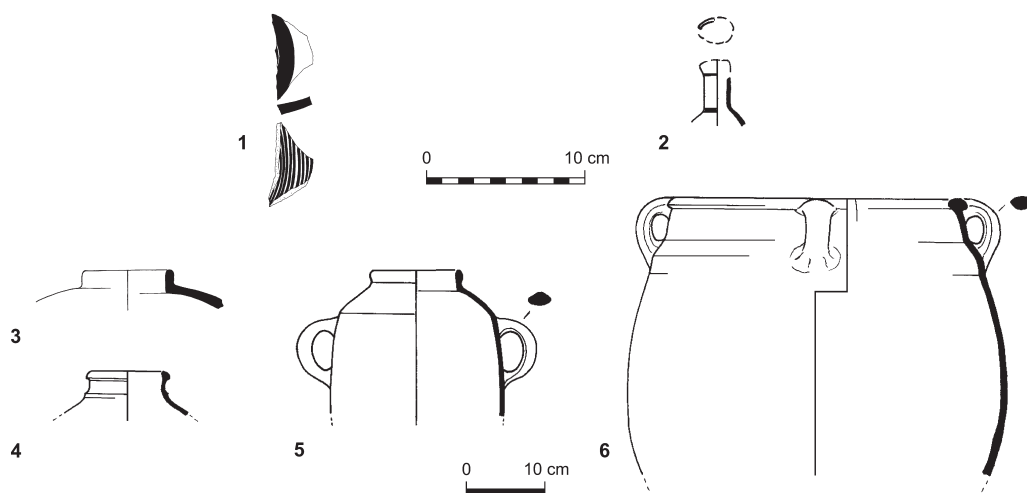


Fig. 5. Tel Gerisa, Pottery of Stratum 4.

completely removed. In Stratum VII a new house was erected, built in an entirely different orientation; it follows the common four-room house plan.

In the four-room house of Stratum VII local pottery and a rich assemblage of Cypriote Black on Red vessels was found. The local repertoire contains a large group of bowls, many of them red-slipped and hand-burnished (Stern 1978: Fig. 12). Some bowls have a horizontal or slanted rim (Stern 1978: Fig. 12:21, 25). The Black on Red assemblage consists mainly of bowls and some juglets (Stern 1978: Fig. 17). Stern dated Stratum VIII to the very end of the 11th century, or the beginning of the 10th century, and Stratum VII to the second half of the 10th century B.C.E. (Stern 1978: 76–77). We maintain that the Stratum VIII pottery which includes collared-rim pithoi (Stern 1978: 68–69, Fig. 19:4) and lacks hand-burnished types differs from that of Stratum VII and should be dated to the Iron Age I. Stratum VII should be attributed to the Late IAIIA. Thus, the site was unoccupied during the Early IAIIA. An occupational gap between Stratum VIII of the Iron Age I and Stratum VII is further supported by the drastic change in the architectural design of the site.

Tel Michal

Tel Michal is a small coastal mound. It was unoccupied during the Iron Age I and resettled in the IAIIA. At this stage remains were also recorded on the small hillocks to the east of the high tell. Two occupational phases, Strata XIV and XIII, date to the IAIIA. The massive construction during the Persian period caused considerable damage to the remains of these layers. The remains on the high tell consist of domestic structures, while those on the lower hillocks apparently served a ceremonial-cultic role (Moshkovits 1989). Two winepresses were uncovered near the eastern hillock, adding an agricultural aspect to the anchorage role of the site (Herzog 1989).

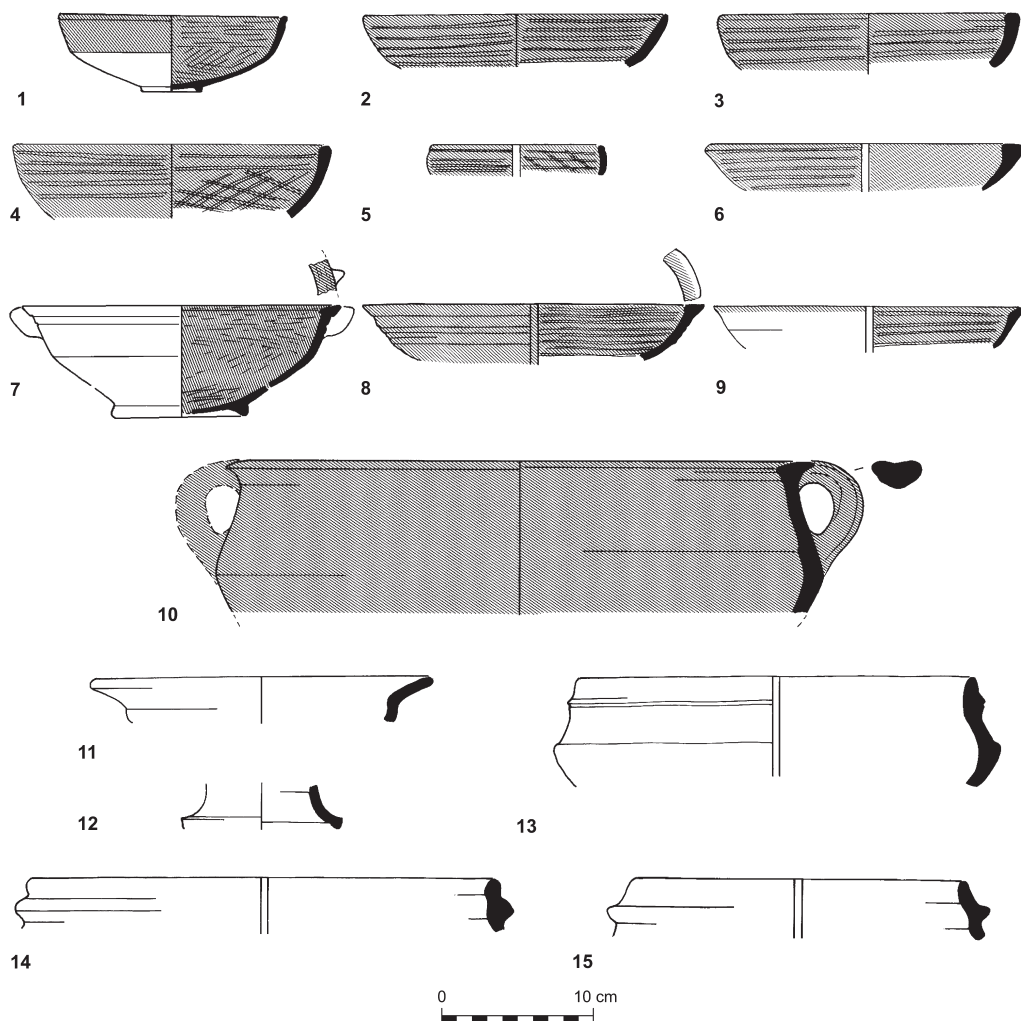


Fig. 6. Tel Gerisa, Pottery of Stratum 3.

The pottery assemblages of Strata XIV–XIII are not rich and are very similar to each other. Very prominent are the red-slipped and hand-burnished bowls and kraters (Singer-Avitz 1989a: Figs. 7.1:2–7, 7.2:1–5, 7.3:1, 2). Some of the bowls have a slanted rim (Singer-Avitz 1989a: Figs. 7.2:1). There are also cooking-pots with elongated ridged rims (Singer-Avitz 1989a: Figs. 7.1:8–9, 7.2:6–7, 7.5:10–11), storage jars with carinated shoulders (Singer-Avitz 1989a: Figs. 7.1:17–18, 7.3:14), and a cylindrical holemouth jar (Singer-Avitz 1989a: Figs. 7.3:16). In both strata there are Black on Red imports (Singer-Avitz 1989a: Figs. 7.1:1, 15, 7.3:10–11) and one locally manufactured bowl which probably imitates a Cypriote Black on Red bowl (Singer-Avitz 1989a: Fig. 7.3:1). Both strata contain pottery types which are typical only to the Late IAIIA.

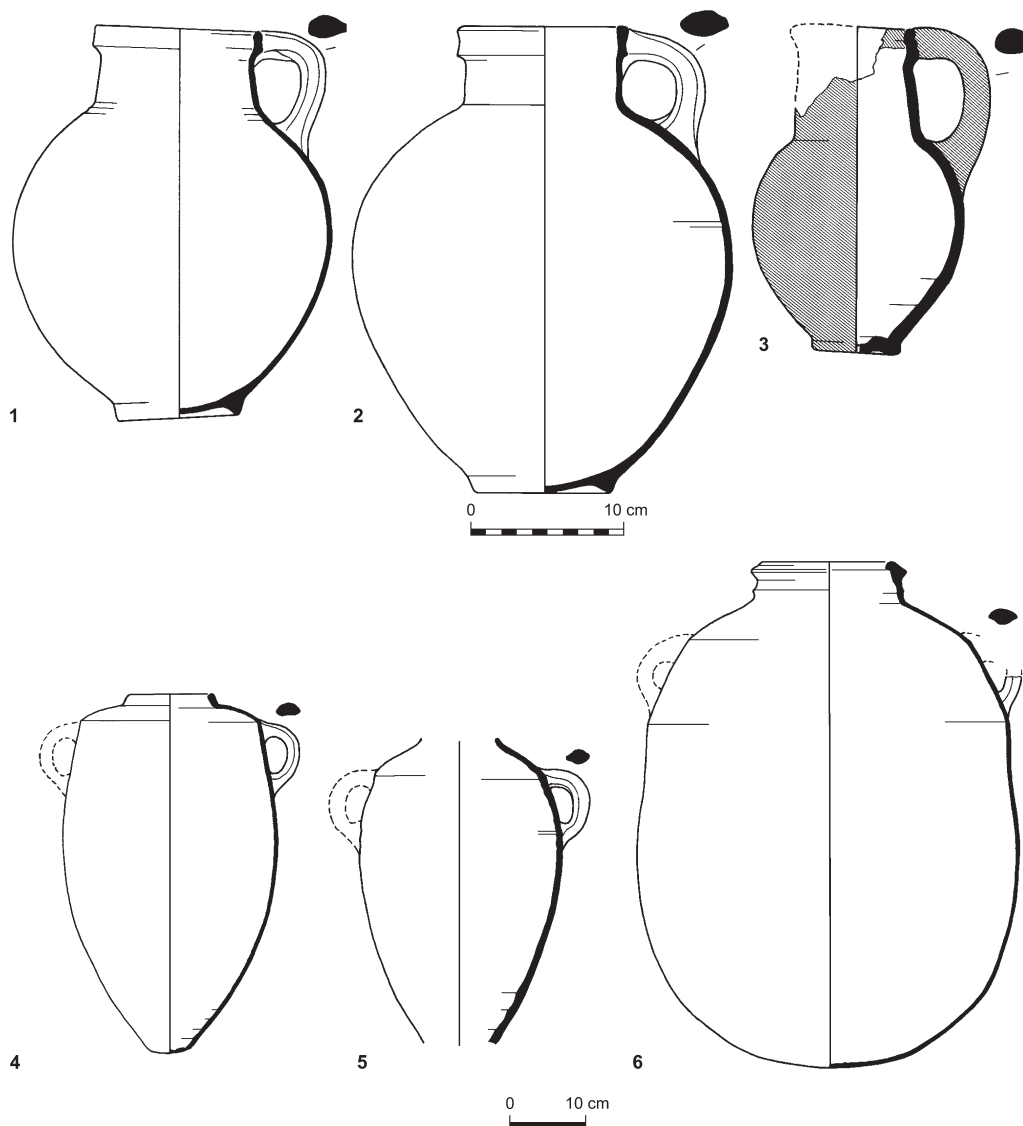


Fig. 7. Tel Gerisa, Pottery of Stratum 3.

Tell Qasile

Tell Qasile is a small settlement erected on a prominent hill on the northern bank of the Yarkon River. The site was settled during the Iron Age I (Strata XII, XI) and flourished in the last phase of this period (Stratum X; for a recent summary see Mazar 2008). Following the severe destruction of the latter settlement the site was resettled on a much smaller scale: only four out of 12 former dwellings were renovated in Stratum IX (Mazar 2008: 319). These houses were reused in Stratum VIII.

The ruins of the other houses at the site remained uninhabited. Only a few complete vessels were recovered from these strata, hence the ceramic assemblage consists mainly of sherds.

In Strata IX and VIII, the red-slipped and hand-burnished bowls and kraters are very prominent. In both strata, alongside vessels made using this technique, vessels known in previous strata of the Iron Age I still appear; we refer to the elongated storage jar (Stratum IX: Mazar 1985: Figs. 52:9–14, 54:4; Stratum VIII: Mazar 1985: Fig. 54:23) and the flattened rim cooking-pot (Stratum IX: Mazar 1985: Fig. 53:18, Mazar and Harpazi-Ofer 1994: Fig. 19:7; Stratum VIII: Mazar 1985: Fig. 55:8). This type of cooking-pot is known in Judah in the Early IAIIA and is not known later. Not one of the pottery types typical of the Late IAIIA is known at Strata IX and VIII of Tell Qasile.³

ʿIzbet Şarṭah

ʿIzbet Şarṭah is located on the border between the hills and the coastal plain (Finkelstein 1986). The small site was occupied in three strata. The earliest (Stratum III) consists of a peripheral belt of houses enclosing a large open courtyard. In Stratum II the planning pattern was changed. The site was dominated by a central, large four-room house (Building 109). This building was surrounded by a series of stone lined silos and sporadic, isolated dwellings located on the outer fringes of the site. The main building and some of the silos were reused in Stratum I. Although the site was characterized by the excavator as “Israelite” and its material culture is considered of the hill country (Finkelstein 1986: 201–5), it seems that it may be seen as a peripheral site of the coastal plain cultural milieu (Mazar 2008: 334 n. 18).

The pottery repertoire is rather poor; most of it consists of sherds. The pottery assemblages of Strata II–I are different from those of Stratum III. The majority of finds assigned to Stratum II comes from peripheral dwellings that were not used in Stratum I. Since Building 109 was reused in Stratum I, all the finds in this unit are assigned to the latter phase. In general, the pottery assemblages of Strata II and I are very similar and the differentiation between them is primarily quantitative rather than typological (Finkelstein 1986: 44–45). Finkelstein dated all strata to the Iron I: Stratum III to the end of the 13th century, or the very beginning of the 12th century, until the first half of the 11th century; Stratum II to the end of the 11th century; and Stratum I to the beginning of the 10th (Finkelstein 1986: 198–201). Recently he re-dated both Strata II and I to the Early IAIIA (Finkelstein and Piasetzky 2006: Table 4 on p. 55; Finkelstein, Sass and Singer-Avitz 2008: 8).

The red-slipped and hand-burnished bowls and kraters are prominent in Strata II and I. In both strata, the vessels that were known in the previous stratum of the Iron Age I, such as decorated Philistine sherds and S-shaped bowls, still appear (Finkelstein 1986: Fig. 14:17–18, 20, 23; 15:3; 19:22). But since the ceramic reper-

3. Two neck fragments of Black-on-Red juglets were found at the site. One was found in a context “later than Stratum X . . . in a level matching a Strata IX–VIII floor,” and the other was found in an “unstratified wash,” close to the surface (Mazar 1985: 82). Since both sherds cannot be attributed securely to either stratum we may assume that they could be attributed to Stratum VII of the Iron Age IIB–C.

toire consists of sherds, it is possible that they are stray sherds which originated from Stratum III. The elongated storage jar (Finkelstein 1986: Figs. 17:16, 22:12–14, 23:20) and the flattened rim cooking-pots (Finkelstein 1986: Figs. 14:5, 15:13, 18:19, 22:3, 24:8, 14) which appear in Strata II and I, are known in Judah only in the Early IAlIA and are not known later. Not one of the pottery types typical of the Late IAlIA is recorded in Strata II and I of ʿIzbet Şarṭah.

Tel Aphek

Tel Aphek is a large mound located alongside the springs of the Yarkon River. During the Iron Age I the mound's summit (Area X) was occupied by domestic structures (Stratum X11) and was covered with layers of grey fill, poor remains of a stone structure, and pits (Strata X10–X9). The IAlIA remains were recorded in Strata X8, X7, and X6 on the summit (Gadot 2009a) and in Area A on the northwestern slope (Gadot 2003: 83).

Stratum X8 consists mainly of numerous stone lined silos and un-walled pits, which yielded a rich assemblage of pottery and other objects. In the next phases (X7–X6) domestic structures were erected, adjoined by new pits. These remains suffered badly from later earth leveling of the area, which made it difficult to decide to which stratum each floor belonged, or with which wall or pit it should be associated (Gadot 2009a: 100–107). Better preserved houses were uncovered in Area A. They resemble the four-room type, but without the dividing pillars. In the destruction layer of these buildings large numbers of storage jars and other household vessels were recorded.

Pottery in Area X Strata X8 and X7. There are red-slipped and hand-burnished bowls and kraters (Gadot 2009b: Figs. 8.84:15–17; 8.85:1–2; 8.88:6–7, 10–12; 8.89:1, 4, 8), cooking-pots with elongated ridged rim (Gadot 2009b: Figs. 8.84:7; 8.85:7, 8; 8.89:5, 12–14; 8.90:12; 8.92:15), dipper juglets (Gadot 2009b: Figs. 8.84:8; 8.85:9; 8.89:11) and elongated storage jars (Gadot 2009b: Figs. 8.87:1–3, 5–6). All these types can be attributed to both phases of the IAlIA. The only vessel type that might testify to the later phase of the IAlIA is the storage jar with the carinated shoulder (Gadot: 2009b: Fig. 8:87:4).

In Area A, in two adjacent dwellings which were terminated by fire, a rich pottery assemblage was unearthed (Gadot 2003: 83). The buildings and their pottery have not been published, but several types testify to the fact that the assemblage should be attributed to the Late IAlIA. It consists of red-slipped and hand-burnished bowls with slanted rim, a holemouth storage jar with four handles, a “hippo” storage jar, carinated shoulder storage jars, cylindrical handleless storage jars, spouted storage jars, amphoriskos, and a Cypriote Black on Red juglet.⁴ All these vessels are not known in the Early IAlIA and appear for the first time in the Late IAlIA. Accordingly, the occupation at Tel Aphek must be assigned to the Late IAlIA. ¹⁴C tests of seeds from Stratum X8 offer a date in the 9th century B.C.E. (Sharon et al. 2007: 43).

4. We would like to thank E. Yadin for showing us the pottery drawings.

Ashdod

Tel Ashdod is a large mound located four kilometers east of the Mediterranean coast. It was occupied from the Middle Bronze Age to the Byzantine period. The site consists of an upper tell or acropolis (ca. 8 ha) and a lower city covering 28 ha. Rich remains of a Philistine settlement were uncovered in several layers (Strata XIIIb, XIIIa, XII, and XI). Iron IIA pottery is recorded in Stratum X. The excavators assign to this phase a city wall on the acropolis (Area G) and an early city gate (Area M), and dated it to the late 11th–early 10th centuries B.C.E. (Dothan and Porath 1993: 13). Stratum IX was dated from the mid-10th to mid-8th centuries B.C.E. (Dothan and Porath 1982: 56).

A thorough examination of the stratigraphy and pottery showed that most loci that have been attributed to Stratum X are not stratigraphically well-defined: they originate from fills, from pits that were mixed with pottery from Stratum VIII, or from walls (Finkelstein and Singer-Avitz 2001: 239–42). The city gate should be attributed to a later stratum (Ussishkin 1990: 82). Stratum IX should not be defined as a separate stratum. It was artificially created and some pottery has been attributed to it (Finkelstein and Singer-Avitz 2001: 242–44).

The pottery published from Stratum X produces a meager assemblage that can be dated to the IAIIA. It contains red-slipped and hand-burnished bowls and kraters (for example: from Area K–H—Dothan and Ben-Shlomo 2005: Figs. 3.82:5–24, 3.83:3–4; from Area M—Dothan and Porath 1982: Fig. 7:1–7, 12) and a flattened-rim cooking-pot (Dothan and Freedman 1967: Fig. 36:14). In this stratum begins the appearance of the decorated “Ashdod Ware” (Dothan and Freedman 1967: 241). Since the nature of this stratum is fragmentary, and as the pottery is scanty, it is difficult to decide to which phase of the IAIIA it should be attributed. Based on the existence of the flattened-rim cooking-pot, we tend to associate it with the Early IAIIA.

Summary and Conclusions

Our survey of the occupational remains in the region provides a picture of a sparse settlement distribution during the IAIIA. The number of settlements in the central coastal plain was meager, the extent of their remains minimal, and most were occupied during a limited period of time. Despite these limitations, and similar to the cases of Judah and northern Israel, it is possible to distinguish two sub-phases during this period.

Interestingly, in most cases the individual sites were occupied only in one of the IAIIA sub-phases (Table 1): Tell Qasile, 'Izbet Šarṭah, and apparently Ashdod in the Early IAIIA, and Tel Mevorakh, Tel Michal, Tel Gerisa, and Aphek in the Late IAIIA. As mentioned above, the remains at Mikhmoret, Tel Poleg, Jaffa, and Ashkelon were too poor to allow assignment to one of the sub-phases.

Our findings indicate a division between the sectors north and south of the Yarkon River. It seems that different locations were selected for erecting the trade stations along the coastal strip. In the Yarkon basin we observe denser habitation, with sites occupied in either of the sub-phases. It seems that the Yarkon basin served as

Table 1. Occupational sub-phases of coastal plain sites in the Iron Age

	Iron Age I	Early IAIIA	Late IAIIA	Iron Age IIB–C
Tel Mevorakh	VIII	—	VII	—
Tel Michal	—	—	XIV–XIII	XII
Tell Qasile	XII–X	IX–VIII	—	VII
‘Izbet Şarṭah	III	II–I	—	—
Tel Gerisa	8–5	—	4–3	—
Aphek	X11–X9	—	X8–X6; A	—
Ashdod	XIII–XI	X?	—?	(IX)–VI

a main west to east transportation artery, and was thus continuously inhabited, though the location of the settlements shifted from site to site. Within this basin, Tell Qasile and ‘Izbet Şarṭah represent the Early IAIIA and Tel Gerisa and Aphek the Late IAIIA.

Another aspect that demonstrates the diversity of settlement pattern in the region is the occupational continuity (or discontinuity), from the Iron I throughout the Iron Age IIB (Table 1). Not a single site was settled during this entire time span. Except for Tel Michal all sites were occupied during the Iron Age I, and the transition to IAIIA saw a drastic reduction in the number of sites. No common factor may be regarded as a cause for the end of the Iron Age I settlements: Tel Mevorakh, Tell Qasile, and Ashdod were terminated by a conflagration, while the Iron Age I occupations at ‘Izbet Şarṭah, Aphek and Tel Gerisa were abandoned. The same holds true for the IAIIA. All the settlements were apparently abandoned without evidence of violent destruction in both the Early and Late IAIIA.⁵ Finally, only a few sites were reoccupied in the Iron Age IIB–C. Tel Michal was inhabited without a break, but Tell Qasile was resettled after a gap in the Late IAIIA. At Ashdod too the Iron Age IIB city was apparently constructed after a gap in the Late IAIIA.

Possible transition of activity between neighboring sites should be mentioned. The settlement of Aphek in the Late IAIIA (Stratum X8) was erected after the neighboring farmstead at ‘Izbet Şarṭah (Stratum I) was deserted (Beck and Kochavi 1993: 69). The termination of the Early IAIIA settlement at Tell Qasile (Stratum VIII) is concurrent with the beginning of occupation at nearby Tel Gerisa (Stratum 4). The latter transition could have been forced by a change in the geological history of the Yarkon River, moving the river bed away from Tell Qasile (Avnimelech 1950–51). Another factor could have been the water-supply system at Tel Gerisa. Possibly the occupants of Tell Qasile moved to Tel Gerisa, being attracted by the availability of the water source within this site (Tsuk and Herzog 1992).

Unlike in the regions east of the coastal strip, where the crystallization of a central authority and the emergence of territorial kingdoms is evident in the Late IAIIA

5. The only exception are two buildings in Area A at Tel Aphek (Beck and Kochavi 1993: 69–70).

(Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004, 2006), no sign of social complexity is manifested in the central coastal plain.⁶ The poor characteristics of the rural settlements in both sub-phases do not point to any change in the socio-economic or political status of the communities.

The limited occupation and paucity of imported objects indicate that the settlers found their subsistence from serving the needs of anchorage for local coastal transportation. They supplemented their income by fishing and occasional wine production (Herzog 1989). This settlement pattern raises doubts about the attempts to look for transportation of copper products from the Arava to Egypt via the Beer-sheba Valley and the southern coastal plain during the IAIIA (Fantalkin and Finkelstein 2006). Such enterprise should surely have resulted in prosperous centers and their satellite villages. This endeavor is related to the days of Sheshonq I: "The southern Coastal Plain was always the jumping-off point for Egyptian involvement in Canaan" (Fantalkin and Finkelstein 2006: 27–28). Although Gaza has not been explored, it would be difficult to assume an affluent international trade in the southern coastal plain with no effect on neighboring settlements. The sporadic remains of rural settlement at Tell Qasile IX–VIII, 'Izbet Şarṭah II–I, and Ashdod X of the Early IAIIA do not exhibit any sign of such alleged commercial prosperity.⁷

The central and southern coastal plain seems to be a marginal region. In the Early IAIIA local farming communities existed in Tell Qasile, 'Izbet Şarṭah and Ashdod. The rebuilding of sites located at the seashore, such as Tel Michal, or along the coastal road, such as Tel Mevorakh, may point to the slow revival of coastal commerce that generated the erection of trading posts, farmsteads, and ceremonial chapels during the Late IAIIA. Other more inland settlements at Tel Gerisa and Aphek suggest an internal west-east route along the Yarkon basin.

6. This is contrary to Faust's conclusions that during the 10th century B.C.E. the Yarkon basin and the Sharon flourished as a result of the United Monarchy activities and its trade with the Phoenicians (Faust 2007).

7. A detailed analysis of the imported Egyptian pottery in the Iron Age strata of Israel has been presented by Ben-Dor Evian. Her study shows that in the IAIIA Egyptian vessels were not imported to the southern coastal sites; these vessels appear only north of Dor (Ben-Dor Avian 2008: 112).

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Distribution and Use of Storage Vessels in the Kingdom of Judah

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Storage vessels are among the most common artifacts found at archaeological digs. They have therefore been the subject of numerous studies, which have mainly focused on their typology, chronology, or special type, i.e., the *lmlk* jar. Less attention has been directed to their functional aspect, to how they were used in daily life. In this article, we shall discuss the distribution of large concentrations of storage vessels discovered in the Kingdom of Judah of the 8th and 7th centuries B.C.E. in order to determine patterns that will enable us to study how the various vessels were used and economic aspects related thereto.

Introduction

The storage vessels of the Iron Age II in Judah can be divided into four main groups: storage jars, holemouth jars, holemouth storage jars, and pithoi.

Storage jars are the most common, and include various types, all of which are characterized by handles that enable them to be lifted and moved, and by a narrow neck that can be sealed (Zimhoni 1990: 6, Fig. 2). Usually they range in height from 50 to 60 cm, and based on an examination of 14 typical examples from a number of sites, the effective volume of the smallest among them is around 20 liters, with the largest reaching volumes approaching 60 liters, with most holding 40–50 liters.¹ Among the typical storage jar types from Iron II Judah are the *lmlk* and the *lmlk*-like jars, the Rosetta jars, the bag-shaped jars, and jars with coastal characteristics (see, for example, Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001: Types SJ7, SJ8, and SJ9; Zimhoni 2004: Figs. 26.6–26.10; and Singer-Avitz 2002: Types SJ1–SJ10).

The holemouth jars are small, handleless storage vessels with a cylindrical shape and a rounded base. They are about 30 cm high and hold between five and nine liters (four typical jars were examined). These storage vessels are common in

1. The measures listed in this article relate to effective volume only, since vessels were probably not filled up to the rim, and “some empty space was left to avoid spilling (e.g., bottle necks) or for seals and corks” (Karasik and Smilansky 2006: 392). Effective volume is computed by defining the “level of filling as the starting point of the neck” (this is in contrast to the calculation of exterior volume, which is important for determining how many vessels could have been stored in a given area; see discussion in Karasik and Smilansky 2006). The calculations were performed by Michal Elkaslassy, a graduate student at Bar-Ilan University, using software developed by Karasik and Smilanski (e.g., 2006). We would like to thank her for her assistance.

assemblages found at various 8th and 7th century B.C.E. sites in Judah, for example at Timnah Strata III and II (Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001: 105–7, Type SJ 10), Lachish Level III (Zimhoni 2004: Fig. 26.19.4), Khirbet er-Ras (Feig 1995: 5), Moza (Greenhut 2006: 182), Arad Strata X–VII (Singer-Avitz 2002: 146, SJ 15–SJ 16), and Beersheba Stratum II (Aharoni 1973: Pl. 58:23–28).

The holemouth storage jars are characterized by a folded rim, a swollen body, and a low ringed base; some have four handles and three ridges in the shoulder area. An examination of six representative vessels showed that their volumes range from 25.5 to 51.2 liters. These vessels have been found at various sites in Judah at strata from the 8th century B.C.E., e.g., at Lachish (Zimhoni 2004: Fig. 26.5:9–12), Tel ʿEton (Zimhoni 1997a: Figs. 4.2.9, 4.7.9–11), and Tel ʿIra (Freud 1999: Fig. 6.81.8).

The pithoi are the largest of the four types of storage vessels. Their volumes range from approximately 150 to 250 liters (based on an examination of five representative pithoi, most of whose volumes lie in the lower range). Pithoi have elongated bodies, and their sides are thick compared to those of other storage jars. Pithoi have been found at various 8th and 7th century B.C.E. sites in Judah, among them, the Ophel in Jerusalem (Mazar and Mazar 1989: Pl. 20:6–7), Lachish (Zimhoni 2004: Fig. 26.50.6), and Tel ʿIra (Freud 1999: Fig. 6.76–77).

It appears reasonable to assume that the various jar types served different purposes. Holemouth jars, for example, appear most suited to storing grain, while storage jars, which could be hermetically sealed and whose contents could be poured, are more suited to storing liquids such as oil and wine.

Yet an examination of the finds shows that the matter is not that simple. For example, the assemblages exposed at Moza (Greenhut 2006: 236), Khirbet er-Ras (Feig 1996: 3), and Beth-Shemesh (Bunimovitz and Lederman, personal communication) all include dozens of holemouth jars. While the holemouth jars found at Moza were located alongside silos, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that they served as grain storage containers, at Beth-Shemesh they were apparently associated with olive oil production (see below); those uncovered at Khirbet er-Ras were likely associated with wine production (Feig 1995: 6). It therefore appears that the same jar types were used to store both liquids and solid products.

The Finds

There is no doubt that in late monarchic times the Kingdom of Judah had a royal, state-administered storage system. This can be deducted from the textual evidence, for example the Arad ostraca (e.g., Aharoni 1981: 143), and from the direct archaeological evidence, i.e., the existence of special buildings that served for large-scale storage purposes. It is not our intention here to study the enigmatic “pilared buildings,” the finds in which do not necessarily point to storage (e.g., Faust 2005: 113–15 and references), but rather to deal with buildings in which dozens of storage jars were discovered. Those constitute the basis for the present discussion.²

2. It is not our intention to deal with household storage. Private structures will be mentioned only when their findings reflect storage in excess of the household’s needs. It is therefore impor-

Timnah (Tel Batash)

A storehouse with many *lmlk* storage jars was unearthed in Stratum III from the 8th century B.C.E. The structure has two longitudinal spaces, and is situated in a residential quarter that was exposed in the northeast section of the mound. The southern space measures 11.35×5 m, and the northern space measures 11.20×4.3 m. It appears that the building extended toward a street running parallel to the city wall. The northern space is paved with flagstones which were covered with a thick layer of lime. Thirty-three *lmlk* jars were found in this space, as well as scoops that appear to have been used for transferring products into and from the jars (Mazar 1997: 189–90). The latter may suggest that at least part of the products stored in the building were not liquids. According to the excavator the structure served a military regiment that was stationed in the area (Mazar 1997: 192).

Beth-Shemesh

In Stratum III, dated to the early 8th century B.C.E., dozens of holemouth jars were found in Area E, and they were accompanied by many scoops, 11 *lmlk*-like jars, and a few pithoi. Although the architectural context is not clear, it is likely that the storage vessels were part of a storage facility. While it is not impossible to connect this storage to the silo and large (royal?) building uncovered by Grant at some distance (Grant and Wright 1939: 70; Wright 1962: 131), and hence to interpret it as related to the storage of grain (Greenhut 2006: 160), the excavators believe that it is much more likely that the storage vessels served the olive oil industry, evidence for which was found nearby (Shlomo Bunimovitz, personal communication). Additional holemouth jars unearthed within installations for the production of olive oil were found in the late 8th century level, both during early excavations (e.g., Momigliano 1996: Fig. 4) and by the more recent excavators (for Area E, see Bunimovitz and Lederman 2000: 255; for Area B, see Greenhut 2006: 161).

Moza

Stratum V, dated to the 8th century B.C.E., is characterized by many silos that were uncovered in the various excavation areas. In Area A, 25 silos were unearthed, with the volume of the largest ones reaching nearly two cubic meters (most were much smaller; Greenhut 2006: 200–204). Many of the silos reach bedrock and are built of small field-stones; some have stone pavement. At the bottom of some of the silos, stone pillars, probably intended to support a ceiling, were unearthed (Greenhut 2006: 204–5). Adjacent to the silos a three-room structure was uncovered. In the central room, which measured 3.8×4 m, 132 smashed holemouth jars were found on the floor. Based on the breakage pattern, it can be suggested that they had been placed on shelves along the walls, or one atop the other (Greenhut 2006:

tant to emphasize that despite the fact that in this article we shall try to arrive at a few generalizations, it is likely that in the household sector, the range of use of various vessels is broader, going beyond the scope of this article.

204–5). The finds that were found in the site led the excavators to suggest that the site was part of the royal system (De Groot and Greenhut 1997: 44–45).

Khirbet er-Ras

The site is located on the southern slope of the Manahat Hill, southwest of Jerusalem. A number of farmsteads were uncovered in the area, some of which are of the “four-room” type. Alongside the buildings, agricultural installations that were used for processing of agricultural products were unearthed (Gibson and Edelstein 1985: 140; Feig 2000: 398–99). In one farmstead, an assemblage of some 300 holemouth jars was found, along with 5 storage jars.³ The vessels were found in the broad back space of a four room building (Feig 1995: 5). Although the storage capacity greatly exceeds the needs of a household, it is clear that it was a storeroom that was part of a dwelling.

The Ophel, Jerusalem

Remains of a few public buildings have been uncovered in the Ophel—the saddle that links the hill of the City of David and the Temple Mount. The first explorer of this area was Charles Warren, who in 1867 excavated the ruins of two towers built of fine ashlar blocks, labeled Tower A and Tower B. The larger of the two towers (B) was 24 m long and 19 m wide. The smaller tower (A) adjoined the northern face of Tower B; Tower A was 16 m long and 8 m wide. In 1967, Kathleen Kenyon uncovered the eastern face of Tower A (Mazar and Mazar 1989: 3). In Benjamin Mazar’s 1976 excavations, a building was uncovered north of Tower A (Building C) that contains two rooms of equal size, measuring 2.80 × 2.40 m. Due to its position, dating, and nature, the excavator identified it as the biblical “House of Millo” (Mazar and Mazar 1989: 13). During 1986–1987, the excavations were renewed, by Eilat Mazar, who suggested that the structure might be a gatehouse consisting of two chambers on each side of an entryway. The southwestern room, with 40 storage jars, is the only one that survived intact (Locus 23041); no other storage vessels were found (Mazar and Mazar 1989: 16, Eilat Mazar, personal communication). Based on this ceramic assemblage, the structure was dated to the 7th–early 6th centuries B.C.E. (Mazar and Mazar 1989: 19). The location of the storeroom within a large public complex, perhaps a gate that leads to the royal compound, points to its importance. To the northeast of this room Eilat Mazar uncovered another public building (Building D) that was only partially excavated. In the eastern room, which measured 2.5 × 5.75 m, seven pithoi were discovered, crowded together along the length of the wall. In the adjoining room, an additional five pithoi were discovered, also placed along the length of the wall (Mazar and Mazar 1989: 29–48). On one of the jars the inscription *לשר האז* [LŠRHʾO] was engraved. The excavators assume that the inscription originally read *לשר האזןפים*, “to the Minister of the Ba[kery].” The last phase of the building, in which the pithoi were found, dates to the very

3. We would like to thank Nurit Feig, who supplied us with the information from the Khirbet er-Ras excavations prior to its publication.

end of the Iron Age, and was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E. (Mazar and Mazar: 60).

Lachish

Storeroom 4014, adjoining the inner gate at its northeastern side, contains a 1.60×4.50 m room with walls of small unworked stones and a plastered brick superstructure. The floor is made of packed earth (Zimhoni 1990: 4). The ceramic assemblage found in the structure included 43 storage jars, one holemouth jar, and 4 holemouth storage jars (Zimhoni 2004: Figs. 26.5:9–26.11:4). The structure was destroyed by fire, along with the rest of Level III, and it appears that the temperature of the fire was high enough to bake the bricks. It can be suggested that the vessels contained oil or some other flammable material, and this was the cause for the high temperatures during the conflagration (Zimhoni 1990: 7). The nature of Storeroom 4014 is not clear. While its location hints at a royal enterprise, perhaps part of the preparation for Sennacherib's campaign, some additional finds (e.g., loom-weights) hint at a more residential nature. Since, however, loom-weights were found in some instances in public contexts, it seems that the public interpretation of the room is more plausible.

In Level II (7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.), two rooms, part of a building that lay adjacent to the city gate, were uncovered. The two rooms (4084 and 4086) were designed as a single rectangular unit measuring 15×3.0 – 3.9 m; each unit was 7 m long. The floor and walls were plastered white. Forty-six storage jars, one holemouth jar, one holemouth storage jar, and one pithos were found in the storeroom (Zimhoni 2004: Fig. 26.44–26.50: 3–6). A large quantity of charred wood was found in both rooms, possibly the remains of shelves upon which vessels had rested. We can learn about the vessels' contents from ink writings found on two decanters: יין עשן (YYN.ŠN; "wine from 'Ashan") and מִזְצִמְקִים שְׁחֶרֶת (MZ.ŠMQM.ŠHRT; "extract of black raisins") (Lemaire 2004: 2119, 2124).

The fact that the palace/fort that served as the administrative center of Lachish was not rebuilt in Level II, and that no other public building was uncovered at this level, led the excavators to conclude that at that time the gatehouse complex was the administrative center of Lachish (Ussishkin 2004a: 522). It is likely that Storerooms 4084 and 4086, which were situated adjacent to the gate, were part of this complex.

Tel Ira

In Stratum VII, dated to the first half of the 7th century B.C.E., a storeroom was found near the city gate. The building, which was erected on a natural terrace, was 1.5 m lower than the city gate surface, and included two rooms in an L shape. One unit measured 3.25×6.5 m, and the other measured about 3×3 m. A stone mortar 0.75 m in diameter was uncovered in the building, mostly sunk in the floor (Finkelstein and Beit-Arieh 1999: 83–87). Thirteen storage jars, one holemouth storage jar, one holemouth jar, and 31 pithoi were discovered in the storeroom (Freud 1999: Figs. 6.74.24–25–6.79). The building's proximity to the gate makes it likely that it served royal purposes.

Discussion

Several factors must be examined in order to explain the distribution of the various types of storage jars at the different sites:

1. Is there a disparity in the frequency of the various types of vessels based on the type of settlement in which they are found, and the settlements' status within the settlement hierarchy in the Kingdom of Judah? Is there a difference, for example, between Khirbet er-Ras—a farmstead—and Lachish, the second most important city in Judah?

2. Though the Kingdom of Judah occupied a small area, it encompassed several different ecosystems and geographical regions: the Jerusalem and Hebron Hills, the Negev, the Judean Desert, and the Shephelah (the lowlands). Can a geographical pattern in the distribution of the various storage-vessels be identified?

3. Can the differences be explained by a functional analysis of the Judahite city-plan, i.e., do certain types of storage vessels appear consistently in the same part of the settlement?

Table 1. Summary of Findings

Site	Storage jars	Hole-mouth jars	Hole-mouth storage jars	Pithoi	Royal/domestic	Classification	Location in relation to gate	Region
Timnah	33	—	—	—	royal	city		Northern Shephelah
Beth-Shemesh	11	dozens	—	present	royal	city		Northern Shephelah
Moza	—	132	—	—	royal	royal estate		Jerusalem and environs
Ophel structure C	40	—	—	—	royal	capital	near the gate	Jerusalem and environs
Ophel structure D	—	—	—	12	royal	capital		Jerusalem and environs
Khirbet er-Ras	5	300	—	—	domestic	farmstead		Jerusalem and environs
Lachish 4014	43	1	4	—	royal?	central city	near the gate	Southern Shephelah
Lachish 4084/86	46	1	1	1	royal	central city	near the gate	Southern Shephelah
Tel 'Ira	13	1	1	31	royal	city	near the gate	Beersheba Valley

Differences according to Settlement Type

As can be seen in the above table, no clear pattern can be identified as far as the type of settlement in which the vessels were found is concerned. Dozens of holemouth jars were uncovered in a private structure at Khirbet er-Ras, which was a farmstead in the agriculture periphery of Jerusalem; and a similar find characterizes the storeroom at Moza, which probably functioned as a royal estate (Greenhut 2006: 312; Faust 2007; Katz forthcoming). An examination of the status of the different sites within Judah's settlement hierarchy reveals that in this case too no

common characteristics can be identified: concentrations of holemouth jars have been found in Beth-Shemesh (a city), Khirbet er-Ras (a farmstead), and Moza (a royal estate).

Differences according to Geographical Location

An examination of the geography/ecology also reveals no clear pattern. In the Jerusalem area, many storage jars were found at the Ophel, and many holemouth jars were found at nearby Moza. In the northern Shephelah, storage jars form the typical find at Timnah (Tel Batash), while at Beth-Shemesh, only 7 km away, holemouth jars form the main component of the assemblage discussed. We should note, however, that in parts of southern Judah, the absence of holemouth jars is conspicuous, as it is at Lachish and Tel 'Ira.⁴

The fact that there are no clearly identifiable patterns seems to suggest that the differences are random, and that in a settlement in which a structure containing holemouth jars was found, another structure could have contained storage jars.

Differences according to Distribution within Sites

It seems, however, that a detailed examination of the areas within the settlements, or more precisely the type of building in which storage vessels were found, reveals an interesting pattern. Storage jars and pithoi dominate the royal storage structures in general, and especially those in the public quarters that were unearthed near city gates. In contrast, high concentrations of the smaller storage vessels—especially the holemouth jars—have been discovered near locations where agricultural products were processed.

Thus, pithoi were more common in royal storehouses, which were in many cases built near city gates, for example, in Building D in the Ophel and in Tel 'Ira. Storage jars were also common in royal storehouses near gates, for example, at Tel 'Ira, Building C at the Ophel, and in both storerooms at Lachish.⁵ Many small storage vessels were unearthed, on the other hand, at Beth-Shemesh near the olive presses or in relation to the olive-production process, and similar vessels were unearthed at Moza, which was a regional storage area located in close proximity to the grain fields of the Soreq Valley. The same is true for the large concentration of holemouth jars unearthed at Khirbet er-Ras.

It can be assumed that due to the difficulty of transporting high-volume pottery vessels, this was avoided whenever possible.⁶ Products that needed to be stored temporarily and then transported locally were stored in small, low-volume pottery

4. Absence of holemouth jars is typical of other sites in the Beersheba Valley, which are not discussed here, since no storerooms have been found there as yet, e.g., at Ḥorvat 'Uza and Tel Malḥatah (Liora Freud, personal communication).

5. While the storeroom at Timnah is not adjacent to the gate, in the excavators' opinion, it should still be interpreted as a public storehouse, as it served a military regiment stationed there.

6. Transportation of products over long distances, i.e., between settlements and regions, was apparently done in sacks or skins, which offered a great advantage over transportation in pottery vessels: the latter could not be loaded comfortably onto a pack animal. Moreover, the vessels' weight reduced practicality, as it reduced the quantity that a beast could bear. Finally, pottery is breakable, and therefore the risk of loss of products was higher than if less fragile containers were used. For more on transportation in sacks, see, for example, Goitein 1967: 334; Faust and Weiss

vessels, e.g., holemouth jars. The connection between storage in holemouth jars and production processes can also be seen, in addition to the above-mentioned sites, at Khirbet Abu Shawan, south of Jerusalem. The farmstead included two structures, and alongside them agriculture facilities (Baruch 2007: 25). In Building 200, a room (201) was uncovered wherein sherds of 10 holemouth jars were found. Next to it, in Room 214, an installation was discovered that was likely used for producing olive oil (Baruch 2007: 27–28). It appears, therefore, that holemouth jars and perhaps other small storage vessels were used for temporary, on-site storage, and perhaps even for local transportation of products, where the danger of loss due to jolting of the pottery vessels was small (see below).

Permanent royal storage was conducted in large vessels placed in storehouses, since in this case there were no plans for immediate transportation of the vessels' contents.⁷ The advantage of storage in large vessels is obvious, as it enabled better exploitation of the storage space. It should also be noted that there was an advantage to long-term storage in pottery vessels as opposed to sacks or skin containers, as the former prevented rodent infestation.

It appears that when the need arose, the products stored in the large vessels were removed from these containers and divided among smaller containers. The actual transportation was carried out in smaller vessels; the pithoi and the storage jars remained in the storerooms waiting to be refilled.

Summary

An analysis of the distribution of storage jar concentrations discovered at excavations of 8th–7th century B.C.E. Judahite sites reveals a pattern: larger storage vessels were used en masse in royal storehouses, usually those discovered near city gates; smaller vessels, particularly holemouth jars, were used in complexes discovered near areas of primary production. It seems that there was no direct connection between the types of products stored and the type of container used. The most significant factor in determining the type of vessels used was the storage context and the anticipated storage period. For temporary storage of a product intended for local transportation, use was made of small pottery vessels that on the one hand preserved the product, but on the other hand eased transportation. For long-term storage in storehouses, large storage jars were used that enabled better preservation of the product and better use of space.

We believe that the considerations presented above were not the only factors influencing the choice of storage vessels for various functions. We also believe that as additional information is acquired in the future, we will be able to add other considerations and understand more about how the ancients used the various vessels. In the interim, we hope that the present discussion will advance the study of the processes of production and storage in antiquity.

2005: 84–85, and additional references; for transportation in skin containers, see, for example, Goitein 1967: 333–34.

7. If the products were brought from a distance, they were transported from the sacks or skin containers to the large ceramic containers. If the products were brought from nearby, it is also possible that they were transported in holemouth jars or in similar relatively small pottery vessels.

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Inside the Walls of Nehemiah's Jerusalem: Naboth's Vineyard

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Some of our fellow historians and archaeologists tend to disregard the Bible and biblical scholarship, while others take the recorded tradition as bare fact, not knowing better or not wanting to know. On the other hand, increasing masses of biblical scholars turn away from the pitfalls of unreliable sources and the fog of historical uncertainty towards fields more easily ploughed, such as structuralist stylistics. In times like these it is a rare pleasure and great honor to pay a small tribute to an archaeologist of Eretz Israel who always sought the dialogue between the facts on the ground and the biblical stories. David Ussishkin is a biblical archaeologist in the very best sense of the word. Here, I offer my thanks to him by showing the impact of both his fieldwork and his desk work on the interpretation of 1 Kings 21—the story of Naboth's vineyard.

The story has been a favorite of biblical research in the past decennia. Scholars are divided between those who read it as an authentic record from the Omride period, those who regard it as a Persian-period fabrication, and those who take up a position somewhere in between these extremes. As early as 1988, Alexander Rofé presented the linguistic evidence that clearly dates the text to the Second Temple period; to no avail, since many biblical scholars, because they also serve as preachers and priests, seem to be immune to facts and unaware of linguistics. At least, the archaeological evidence now leads to the same result.

The Vineyard Next to the Palace

The story of 1 Kings 21 can be summarized as follows: "Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria" (21:1, NRSV). The king wanted that particular piece of land in order to have a royal vegetable garden next to his kitchen. Naboth refused: "The LORD forbid that I should give you my ancestral inheritance" (1 Kgs 21:3). Ahab's Phoenician wife Jezebel turned this refusal of a commercial transaction into a power play between her (and her husband) and the Israelite citizen: "Do you now govern Israel?" (1 Kgs 21:7), she said. "So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal; she sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who lived with Naboth in his city" (1 Kgs 21:8) and convened a kangaroo court, which obediently condemned Naboth to death for blasphemy (to "have cursed God and the king," 21:10). After Naboth was stoned

to death, Ahab, again on Jezebel's instigation, took possession of the deceased's vineyard (21:15–16).¹

Few biblical scholars and historians of the ancient Near East could withstand the temptation to use this colorful and detailed story for their reconstructions of Israel's social history in the 9th century.² Among the few who could are A. Rofé (1988) and E. Blum (2000). Foreign marriages—as exemplified in the figures of Ahab and Jezebel—were a problem of the 5th century, not of the Israelite and Judahite monarchies (for kings of the ancient Near East, such marriages were a necessary means of diplomacy and foreign politics). A council of “elders and nobles” (21:8) is well attested for Nehemiah's Jerusalem and, by the Elephantine correspondence, thereafter (Rofé 1988). Such a council is unconceivable for Ahab's Jezreel, which was a royal military camp, a *castra legionis* well *avant la lettre*, where the king, as supreme commander of the army, might have had a palace (which he may have bequeathed to his widow, who died there). Israelite Jezreel definitely was not a city in which a vineyard could have been accommodated (Blum 2000).³ In addition, it is extremely unlikely that, had Jezreel been a town with a minimal civil population, a citizen of Jezreel would have thought of taking recourse to Israelite common law. Jezreel was, together with the plain of the same name, a center of Canaanite culture in Omride Israel.⁴ This is why the chariotry corps was probably stationed there—not merely in order to feed the horses more conveniently and to “pacify” (and defend) the cities, which were still predominantly Canaanite in this region, unwalled under the Omrides just as they had been under Egyptian control (Finkelstein 2000), but also because Omri established the majority of this force by his takeover of the Canaanite cities and their military, just as Sargon II added conquered Israelite charioteers to his royal guard.

We may look at as many city plans from the kingdoms of Israel and Judah as we like (conveniently prepared and collected by Herzog 1997); we always find crowded settlements within narrow streets. Recourse to the unknown layout of the city of Samaria does not really help. For it can be argued that pre-Sargonide Samaria was no more than a royal castle and residence (Niemann 2007). In all of pre-Hellenistic Eretz Israel, there is only one city whose inhabitants would not have regarded the notion of a vineyard next to a palace perfectly insane: Jerusalem, as rebuilt by Nehemiah and as reconstructed by David Ussishkin (2006). In retrospect, it is hard to understand why it took biblical archaeology so long to get the reconstruction right; how could the number of the gates mentioned in Nehemiah 3, and their names,

1. The remainder of the story—Elijah's intervention, his pronouncement of divine judgment on the culprits, and the fulfillment of his prophecy (1 Kgs 22:29–38; 2 Kgs 9:36) need not concern us here. In history, Ahab died peacefully in his residence (1 Kgs 22: 40), possibly of a wound received at Qarqar (or an infection caught on the campaign?), as N. Na'aman suggests, and not immediately enough for Shalmanasser III to have claimed credit for the kill.

2. Just a selection: Donner 1995: 295–301; Kessler 2006: 99; Kelle 2007: 70–71.

3. Blum (2000: 123, note 63) already argues with the archaeology of Tel Jezreel, which is ignored, at least in this respect, by Kessler 2006 and Kelle 2007.

4. Whereas Samaria was built in the tribal territory of Manasseh. Donner 1995: 295–301 presents the picture upside-down.

ever be accommodated on the southeast hill? Keel (2007: 952), reproducing the reconstruction of Carter (1999), suppresses three of the gates mentioned by the text and still has 5 gates on 500 m of city wall. This looks ridiculous. Jerusalem, around 450 B.C.E. was still an outpost of the sown on the desert frontier, a defense of the prime agricultural area of Benjamin against the "sword from the desert" (cf. Blenkinsopp 2000). This implies, on the other hand, that Nehemiah need not have built the kind of massive city wall that might withstand an Assyrian siege. He only needed a wall high and cumbersome enough to keep the Bedouin from raiding the hen houses and onion fields of the newly resettled Jerusalemites. It must have been easier to do that on the complete line of the previous city wall than to construct a new and much smaller one. For long runs, it must have sufficed to clear away the debris in order to make the remnants of the wall a serious obstacle for Bedouin raiding parties. Occasional breaches had to be filled, but a stockade or a palisade on top of the mound formed by the mudbrick debris would have done that job. Actually, one of the actions repeatedly mentioned is the furnishing of the city gates with new doors, not the building of new gates.

Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Manasseh's Jerusalem, i.e., he walled in living space for 15,000 inhabitants to accommodate 3,000. So the citizens' gardens and fields were also under the protection of the walls, as was the case in many European medieval cities. In the middle of the 5th century, this enormous effort even made strategic sense. With Idumaea not yet established as a Persian province—this had to wait for the 4th century to be accomplished (Lemaire 1999)—Jerusalem still marked the border between the desert of the Qedarite Geshem (cf. Lam 5:9) and the Benjaminite sown. The pattern recalls medieval European cities (like Cologne), in which less than 50% of the space *intra muros* was built up, and a type of Arabian oasis town, like Tayma from at least the end if not the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C.E., because both types of settlements responded to the same social needs. To have valuable plantations—long term investments, quickly destroyed—protected by the town walls makes sense in social environments where the bad habit prevails of coveting one's neighbor's house and everything that is in it, and of feeling free to try, at least, to get it.

Ussishkin's discovery of the real dimensions of Nehemiah's Jerusalem vindicates Rofé's interpretation, contextualization and dating of the Naboth story in 1 Kings 21. The basic data have been on the table since 1988. Why were they ignored by so many for so long? We now need to consider, once more, the impact of ideology on the reconstruction of ancient Israel's social history.

Intermezzo: The Ezra-Revolution

The legal proceedings instigated by Jezebel and Ahab show a thorough knowledge of biblical law: one is not supposed to curse the *nasi*?. Because the law says "You shall not revile God, or curse a leader of your people" (Exod 22:27), one might construe *laisse majesté* as always implying blasphemy—if one had the written Law and some of the principles of its interpretation and application, which did not

emerge before the Persian period.⁵ At least two witnesses are needed to condemn a person to death (Num 35:30; Deut 17:6, 19:15). Naboth's execution follows the prescriptions of Lev 24:10–16, 23 and Deut 17:7. Knowing the Torah that well, Jezebel and Ahab should also have known that it was illegal to sell one's *nahalah* (Lev 25:23; Deut 19:14).⁶ In addition, giving land from the tribal allotment of Issachar to a Manassite is a violation of the amendments in Joshua 14–21 to the law of Num 36:1–9, as Sweeney (2007: 249) argues. An additional feature indicates that 1 Kgs 21 presupposes both the Torah and the book of Joshua, its first deuterio-canonical interpretation (Knauf 2008). Why can Ahab take Naboth's property after his execution? Is it possible that a grown-up Israelite had no descendants who could claim the inheritance? There is no law that gives the property of convicted blasphemers to the crown; quite the contrary, there would always be a legal heir (Num 27:8–11). Legal procedures as prescribed by the Torah leave nothing to the king, justice is a matter of the tribe and, in case of appeal, the Jerusalem priests (Deut 17:8–13). If, however, Lev 24:10–16, 23 and Deut 17:7 were interpreted by Josh 7:15, 24–25, Naboth would have been killed together with his family, and this is exactly what 2 Kgs 9:26 implies happened. Then, the king could claim Naboth's land as *res nullius*—an heirloom tainted by the sin of the deceased to a degree that no righteous Israelite would want to own it.

The historical evaluation of the Naboth incident depends on the question of when and how the Torah was conceived and formulated.⁷ In the pre-Wellhausen view,⁸ it was basically perceived by Moses (someone from the same generation) at the very beginnings of Israel's history, perhaps in a revolutionary act of emancipation from feudal polytheism (or polytheistic feudalism). From then on, its principal content was always known by every Israelite and Judahite, regardless of when and how much of it became fixed in writing. For the Wellhausen view, the Torah is an intellectual concept of the exilic and Persian periods. Even if using pre-exilic sources and materials to a disputed degree,⁹ it marks a complete break with the failed history of Israel and Judah, leading to a new start for the "true Israel," the community of Torah and the Second Temple. This Torah is much more revolutionary, in fact, than it would be according to the hypothesis of its "Mosaic" origins, but the name of the principal scribe would be Ezra. It does not only mark a clear break with "Canaan," but also with nearly everything that had previously existed

5. In the 2nd century B.C.E., Ben Sira extended the range of the persons protected by this very law to the parents (Sir 3:16 NRSV).

6. That these laws were an innovation of the exilic and postexilic periods (as will be argued *infra*) is also supported by Ezek 45:8; 46:16–18, where their principal content appears in the context of a proposed constitution for a future "true Israel."

7. It should go without saying (but it does not, because of the high percentage of religious fanatics participating in our discussions) that, for historians, neither traditions nor texts drop from Heaven; cf. Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983.

8. Also encountered under the label of "post-Wellhausenism." From Gunkel to the pupils of G. von Rad, biblical scholars have frequently claimed to have "led beyond Wellhausen"—mostly disregarding that leading beyond a summit usually implies some kind of downturn.

9. Which do not necessarily, at present, comprise J and E; nor is 19th century anti-Judaism, which saw in the religion of the book a sad decline from its romantic, proud, "nomadic" beginnings, a necessary condiment of the theory of a "Persian Torah."

in the religion and politics of Israel, and still persists in much of the world. In the ancient Near East (including the Persian empire) and much of modern history, God chooses the king who in turn gives law and order to the world. In the Torah, God chooses a people and gives them a law which tells the king what to do and what not to do (Deut 17:14–20). In the ancient Near East, God has a terrestrial representative, His “image”: the king of the universe and, secondarily, the state or people doing the king’s bidding who acts for his god. In the Torah, each person (as God created them: male and female) is a representative of God on earth, with all the responsibilities this position implies. In the ancient and much of the modern world, knowledge of the law bestows power on those who are privileged with it (that is why lawyers are liked so much by so many). Ezra demands that the Law be read and taught to each and every Israelite.

The Torah is not about “monotheism,”¹⁰ nor is it about “social justice.” Both topics occur, but rather marginally. It is about the dignity of Man, and the Rule of Law. “The Western world has a double root, Ezra’s Jerusalem and Justinian’s Rome.”¹¹ Misdating the Torah, or taking it for anything other than the “foundation myth of biblical Israel” (Kratz 2000), is another way of thoroughly misunderstanding and misrepresenting it—but, of course, a way well trodden. As a myth, and as specified and elucidated by Prophets and Writings, the Torah is not an inventory of events in a distant past; it is the point from which each generation can start life again—in spite of history.

Ancient Israelite Landholding

One of the impediments to objective knowledge in the field of biblical history is religious romanticism: as if the religious and moral philosophy contained in the Torah were more “true” if it were written—and read by all Israelites—500 or 700 years before Ezra. Another impediment of more recent import is social romanticism, intending to make us believe that the social and economic politics of the Torah, respectable as they are, were a reality in the life of Israel well before the advent of the state. This position is now mainly maintained by a number of mostly German “social historians” of ancient Israel, who should rather be regarded as “socialist historians” (given the lack of economic expertise so evident in their work, and their not-at-all hidden agenda). After the abysmal failure of the socialist experiment in the 20th century, this is a vain attempt to “rescue” a bit of the past for it—necessitating repeated attempts to “rescue” Naboth’s vineyard for the 9th century.

The clans of Iron I and IIA Israel and Judah were predominantly endogamous (Num 36:8; Lehmann 2004). Endogamy on the level of the clan serves two basic purposes. Fortifying the ties of kinship enhances social coherence (and military

10. Assmann’s (1997) “mosaic distinction” between true and false religion is, in fact, an “Assmanic” distinction based on a Hellenistic-Christian-German-idealistic reading of the Torah (and the rest of the Bible). The Torah did not tell 4th century B.C.E. Judeans what to believe, but what to do if they wanted to survive. If “monotheism” is defined as the assumption that the class of “all gods” contains but a single element, the Torah (with the rest of the TeNaKh) is largely, or fairly, but not completely monotheistic, as every attentive reader will know.

11. Athens, again, is marginal, and of rather doubtful impact; cf. Popper 1966.

fervor), and it keeps the lands of the clan together (and keeps outsiders from voting in the clan assembly). A preference for intra-clan transfer of land, thus, can be observed in Israel from the beginning. But does this imply the early existence of the mature ideology of "the land of YHWH" as encountered in the Torah? Preferred intra-clan inheritance of grounded property can be regarded as one of the manners and customs of early Israel which became law in the course of the formation of the Torah—like the aniconic representation of the supreme deity, which can be traced back to the Iron I period (Keel and Uehlinger 1988: §V 1), or the pork taboo (Finkelstein 1996). Both customs, though observable in Israel from its very beginnings, did not become formal and written "law" before the Persian period. As far as customs are concerned, there are always exceptions. The ancient Israelites ate much less pork than their neighbors (with the exception of the Edomites), but this does not mean that they never ate pork at all (cf. Hübner 1989). At least the cult of Asherah (or, at Bethel/Elephantine, 'Anat-Yaho) remained iconic till the end of the Judahite monarchy (and outside of Jerusalem, beyond that end¹²). The borders of Josiah's Judah coincide with the limits of the distribution of "pillar figurines" (or domestic Asherahs; Kletter 1999), and prior to its destruction in 586 B.C.E., the cult of the First Temple was probably iconic, too (Niehr 1997; Uehlinger 1997; Keel 2007 still argues for the opposite). The pork taboo probably originated during a subsistence crisis in the course of the Late Bronze and/or Early Iron Age—pigs feed on the same foodstuff as men; so in times of scarce resources, it makes more sense to feed the humans rather than feed humans and pigs which then feed humans.¹³ The necessity became a custom and then an ethnic marker—the frequency of pig bones from Israelite sites is below 1% or even 0.1% but it is not zero.

The very term *naḥalah*, which designates Israel's inalienable possession of its land, betrays the origin of this system of landholding in the period of the monarchies. *Naḥalah* by no means signifies "inheritance"; the term has its roots in ancient Near Eastern "feudalism." In Ugarit, it is "fief," given by the king in exchange for services to the state (Heltzer 1976; 1982). The fief is inalienable on the side of the fief-holder (possessor), because it remains in the property of the fief-giver who may dispose of it otherwise if the fief-holder neglects his duties. There is no question that God takes the place of the ancient Near Eastern king in Israel's laws on landed property (Lev 25:23). That is another element of the "intellectual revolution towards the liberty of men" which the Torah brought about.

As in all other states of the ancient Near East, it cannot be doubted that the kings of Israel and Judah, too, claimed ownership of all the state's land. When Omri bought Shemer's estate (1 Kgs 16:24), he did not pay for the land, but recompensed Shemer for the loss of his installations and investments and possibly also for the loss of income. With little bureaucracy available through the 9th and 8th centuries (it is not before the 7th century that the number of Hebrew seals multiplied explosively), the kings of Israel (and Judah) took the cheapest way out by making the

12. Cf. Ezek 33:25; TAD C3.15; Knauf 2002.

13. In addition, the pig is a luxury domestic animal insofar as it does not serve any useful purpose while alive—except in affluent societies where it helps in waste management.

tribal authorities agents of the state—"giving" the land to the clans for collective service (in the militia and in the *corvée*). Israelite kingship did not replace Israelite kinship systems, it made them operative for the purposes of the state. The king could require service for the lease of the family's land; the model for Israelite secondary state formation was provided, after all, by none other than Egypt (Genesis 39) and Canaan. But the "fief administration" did not bother to register the individual families; it lay responsibility for the fulfillment of duties on the clans. This is exactly what the Crusaders—always short of Frankish manpower—established in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and what remained intact, at least for parts of the realm, well into late Ottoman times: the responsibility of the whole village (or the clan/tribe) for the payment of taxes (Prawer 1980). In Joshua 19, the town lists for the northern tribes of Naphtali (certainly), Zebulun, Issachar (probably), and Asher (possibly) are based on administrative lists deriving from the reign of Jeroboam II. This might imply that in the 8th century, even the provincial division of Israel was based (still or again) on its tribal organization.

YHWH did not inherit Israel's land from the kings of Canaan in the Early Iron Age (*pace* Alberty, Gottwald, and others), but from the kings of Israel and Judah. The "Torah revolution," in the case of land ownership, served several purposes—and met the needs of the time. Now, ownership of the land had become a topic of bitter controversy. There was the dispute on ownership between the disowned descendants of the deportees of 597, 586, and 582, and those who had profited at their expense (of course, there were also disputes between, e.g., the descendants of the 597 group and the 586 group). By the 5th century, the economy was partially monetarily based. Now there was the possibility of exchanging land for money on a larger scale, but also the threat of losing one's land because of tax debt. Claiming land-ownership for God was a way, for the Second Temple, to save a piece from the estate of the late Israelite and Judahite kingdoms for its own coffers (otherwise, the rights of succession would have fallen to Persia). By inhibiting the latifundalization of Yehud, the priestly aristocracy could try to prevent the emergence of a competing landed aristocracy (the Temple lost that fight in the second half of the 3rd century when tax farming opened the way to wealth and power to non-priestly families). By declaring the families' landholding inalienable, the Temple gained support from the population at large which might otherwise have resisted (more) to some of the other unprecedented innovations of the "Torah revolution" (Guillaume 2009).¹⁴

Looking for the Invisible

Ill-founded beliefs—like beliefs in the historicity of the Naboth incident—are worse than ignorance, for the (educated) ignorant at least know they do not know. Today we know much more about the Omrides than we did 20 years ago, because

14. The "distribution of the land" in Joshua 13–21 shows a number of different layers or voices, formulating a number of interests; some, like the "land to be liberated" (Joshua 18–19), have political aims; others, like the "distribution by lot" in the presence of priests and elders make sure that the divine gift of land finally filters down to the individual *beyt av* (cf. Joshua 7).

of the data from Jezreel and Megiddo (Finkelstein 2000), but also because the Bible is no longer regarded as a source of detailed information on the 10th and 9th centuries, and no longer leads us astray. Like the archaeologist, the historian of the Bible must remove the layers from the 5th through 8th centuries and sift their debris thoroughly to get to the bits and pieces from the 9th century, encased in the biblical tradition. Like the archaeologist, the historian looks for something that is invisible on the surface of the tell and on the surface of the text.

And sometimes, the invisible remains invisible and can only be predicted on the basis of evidence which presupposes it. There is the problem of the archaeological invisibility of Persian period Jerusalem (Finkelstein 2008), which extends well into the early Hellenistic period. But then, Jerusalem is documented again in 259 B.C.E., by Zenon, under the name of *Ἱεροσόλυμα*. It is, in addition, wholly unlikely that the governor and the council of notables (*hrim*), to which the Jews/Judeans of Elephantine addressed letters between 410 and 408/7 B.C.E. had their residences and meeting rooms anywhere else but in Jerusalem. In this case, the absence of evidence clearly is not evidence of absence. The biblical record of 3000 inhabitants of Jerusalem (or 10% of the population of Yehud) around 400 B.C.E. comes close to expectation, especially if compared with the Judean community of Elephantine (at least 3,500 inhabitants, perhaps more). What has to be explained—and can be explained—is the absence of much archeological evidence for that settlement, not the epigraphic and narrative record in spite of the silence of archeology. Mainly two reasons might account for this constellation. First, the settlement was “spread thin”—3,000 persons distributed over a space that could house 15,000, or even 25,000 without too much difficulty. Second, the settlement was not destroyed and sealed, but continually settled and rebuilt until 70 C.E., with very considerable construction activity, digging very deep, in the 200 years before 70 C.E. Thus, Persian settlement debris was permanently recycled for 500 years, and every object of possible re-use sifted out.

After all, there is little doubt that there was a governor’s palace in Jerusalem after 444 B.C.E., poor and insignificant as it might have looked in comparison to other palaces from the biblical world, but not in comparison to other buildings in Persian period Jerusalem. Most probably, there were both a vineyard and a kitchen garden next to it.

Conclusion

The field archaeologist has again and again the unpleasant tasks of plucking up—the vegetation growing in the designated area—and pulling down—walls from the present stratum in order to go down to the next. But his results enable the desk archaeologists, the historian and the biblical scholar to plant and build a better history, for a better world.

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The Evolution of the 8th-Century B.C.E. Jerusalem Temple

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It is a great honor and pleasure for me to present these modest remarks on the Temple in Jerusalem in a book dedicated to David Ussishkin. During my many seasons at Lachish, David communicated to me not only the difficulties but also the efficacy of comparing archaeology and texts.

As is well known, apparently no archaeological remains have come down to us from the First Temple in Jerusalem—the temple built by Solomon (Ussishkin 2003a). At very most, if we accept E.-M. Laperrousaz's hypothesis (1973; 1975; 1982a; 1982b; 1987; see already *Jewish War* V, 185; Perrot and Chipiez 1887: 214–15), the only physical evidence we have of this 10th century temple is part of the eastern retaining wall of its terrace, i.e., that of the Haram ash-Sherif. Unfortunately, testing Laperrousaz's hypothesis is unrealistic since it would require checking the foundation trench of this retaining wall. However, although the material remains from the First Temple provide us with no information, the biblical book of Kings does offer a vast range of textual information.

The biblical texts provide detailed information as to when the Temple was built and by whom, as well as when it was destroyed and by whom. We seem to have a precise enough pre-Deuteronomistic description of its architecture and its content (1 Kings 6; 7:13–51; see Smith 2006; *pace* Van Seters 1997; Na'aman 1997: 74–76; McCormick 2002: 143–44), as well as several notices about its repairs and transformations and the cult that was practiced in it. Of course, these texts are the subject of different interpretations (Busink 1970; Zwickel 1999; Monson 1999; 2000) and may contain late corrections or additions. However, at least in their core, they seem to retain some concrete historical information (Mazar 2006: 267, *pace* Knauf 2000).

Many commentators, starting with those in the 19th century, have emphasized that the Solomonic Temple was a royal chapel, a kind of an outbuilding of the royal palace (e.g., Stade 1887: I, 311–12; Perrot and Chipiez 1887: IV: 154, 229; Möhlenbrink 1932: 60; Alt 1930: 55–56 / 1953: 46: 55–56; Albright 1942: 139; Ussishkin 2003b: 535; *pace* Vincent 1957). Thus, Renan (1889: II: 142) stated: “c’est un temple domestique, une chapelle de palais, non le temple d’un grand peuple ou d’une cité ayant en elle-même un énergique principe municipal. Il faudra des siècles pour que cet édifice devienne un centre de vie et un objet d’amour.” If this is the case, we have to ask a historical/architectural question: What were the stages in which this “royal chapel” was transformed into a national temple? In what follows I wish to

suggest that two important changes undertaken during the second half of the 8th century B.C.E. facilitated this transformation.

The first change is indicated in a short notice concerning King Jotham (ca. 749–739, 735/4 B.C.E.): “it was he who constructed the Upper Gate of the house of YHWH” (2 Kings 15: 35b). This is apparently a sort of an annalistic/archival account (Montgomery and Gehman 1951: 453; Gray 1970: 630; Würthwein 1984: 385) celebrating a royal construction (verb: *bânâh*). At first view, this construction does not seem very important and was only noted here because the book of Kings is much interested in the Temple. Two questions may be asked about this short account: (1) What was this Upper Gate and where was it located? (2) What was the need to construct such an Upper Gate?

Regarding the first question, the adjective ‘*Elyôn*, “upper,” probably refers to a gate higher than the other ones, i.e., probably situated north of the Temple. This location seems to be confirmed by Jeremiah 20:2: “the Upper Gate of Benjamin, in the house of YHWH” (see also Jer 37:12), and Ezekiel 9:2: “the Upper Northern Gate.” Since the territory of Benjamin was north of Jerusalem, both verses indicate that this Upper Gate was built north of the Temple (see also Ezek 8:14), as indeed understood by most commentators (e.g., Thenius 1849: 356; Kittel 1900: 268; Montgomery and Gehman 1951: 453; Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 182; Buis 1997: 245; Sweeney 2007: 377).

The second question is more difficult to answer and commentators are generally silent about it. One may remark, first, that 2 Kings 15:35b uses the verb *bânâh*, “to build,” to describe this action and not only the verb *pâtaḥ*, “to open.” It was probably not only a simple break in the line of the wall but a built gate, i.e., a fortified gate, eventually with four or six chambers as is well known in Iron II Judah. For such a built and fortified gate in Judah during the 8th century B.C.E., one could compare the main six-chamber city-gate at Lachish (Ussishkin 2004: 624–53) or the entrance to the palace courtyard there (Ussishkin 2004: 817–26). The comparison with the main city-gate at Lachish seems all the more justified as in Jerusalem this new Temple gate apparently opened in the city-wall and led to the north. Furthermore, because of the topography, this northern side was the weakest point in the fortifications of Jerusalem. For security reasons, it was necessary that such a northern gate should be fortified. Actually such a fortified gate soon had to face the assaults of Rezin, king of Aram, and Pekah, son of Remaliah, king of Israel (ca. 734: Isa 7:1), and of Sennacherib’s army (701: 2 Kings 18:17).

Though the verb *bânâh* may eventually indicate reconstruction, this was probably not the case here since such a northern gate does not seem to be previously mentioned (see already Benzinger 1899: 170). This is particularly clear in the detailed story of the *coup d’état* against Athaliah in the second half of the 9th century B.C.E., which was organized in the Temple (2 Kings 11:4–20). As expected, several gates are referred to in this story, because it was necessary to control any unexpected arrival, but no Upper/Benjamin/Northern gate is mentioned. This *coup d’état* seems to reveal that by this time the Temple was probably connected with the royal palace through two gates: directly through the gate of the outrunners (v. 6), probably also

called “Gate of the Guards” (v. 9), and indirectly through the Gate of the Horses (v. 16; see Jer 31:40; Neh 3:28; 2 Chr 23:15), probably also mistakenly called “Sur Gate” (v. 6; see Rudolph 1950: 475). Actually the whole story seems to make clear that at this time the Temple was still a kind of “royal chapel” for the coronation of the kings, an annex to the royal palace, to which people could enter only—or at least primarily—through the royal palace.

This comparison clarifies the meaning of the building of the Upper Gate by King Jotham. From then on, people could have accessed the Temple of YHWH directly, especially from the territory of Benjamin. The Temple was no longer only a royal chapel but was open to the people around Jerusalem; it was no longer a meeting place for the king, his family, and his officers; from now on it was possible for any Judahite coming from outside the city to enter the sanctuary.

This interpretation seems to be confirmed by Jeremiah 36:10: “Then Baruch read Jeremiah’s words in the house of YHWH out of the book in the hearing of *all the people*; he read them from the room of Gemariah son of Shaphan, the scribe, in the upper court at *the entrance of the New Gate* of the house of YHWH”; and 26:9b–10: “The people all gathered against Jeremiah in the house of YHWH. The officers of Judah heard what was happening, and they went up from the royal palace to the house of YHWH and took their places there at the entrance of the New Gate.” The appellation “New Gate” apparently fits very well the gate built by Jotham, which became an important and popular meeting place to deal with judicial affairs. Incidentally, such an appellation seems to confirm that the verb *bânâh* in 2 Kings 35:15b refers to a new building and not to a reconstruction.

The second change in the Temple was made by King Ahaz and is described in detail in 2 Kings 16:10–18. This important passage is clearly based on good information; in this case too it seems to have been presented in detail because of the interest of the authors of Kings in the Temple. Cogan and Tadmor (1988: 393; see also Smelik 1997: 276; 1998: 153, 157) ascribed it to a “priestly source, not a royal chronicle.” However, this is not necessarily so since in the ancient Near East, kings were very interested in temples and in glorifying themselves by building or renovating them (Hurowitz 1992; see already Kittel 1900: 270), as well as by leading cultic reforms (Na’aman 2006). Furthermore we shall see that this cultic reform had some political meaning. One may also emphasize that in this passage “we do not find any negative remark on the actions Ahaz had taken” (Smelik 1998: 157, 183).

The historical context of this reform is indicated at the beginning of v. 10. This verse states that “king Ahaz went to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria at Damascus.” This historical information, given in passing, is all the more credible because Ahaz proclaimed himself vassal of Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings 16:7) and, like Panamuwa king of Sam’al (Šanda 1912: 200; Montgomery and Gehman 1951: 459), might well have taken part in the siege of Damascus by the Assyrian king. The meeting with Tiglath-pileser III at Damascus probably took place just after the city was taken, in 732/1 (Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 192; Smelik 1997: 271; Dubowsky 2006). However this archival notice does not seem to be interested in the international affairs, but only by its consequences for the cult in the Temple. Actually it presents two

important developments in the Temple: the building of a new altar (vv. 10–16) and the removal of the bronze bases for basins and the Sea of Bronze (vv. 17–18).

The removal of the bronze bases for the basins and the Sea of Bronze and their replacement by stone bases (v. 17) is not explained. However most commentators interpret it as a result of the need to send bronze as tribute to Tiglath-pileser (Therinus 1849: 364–65; Montgomery and Gehman 1951: 461; Mulder 1982: 167; Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 189–90; Würthwein 1984: 391; Sweeney 2007: 385). One can compare this account with the later looting of bronze from the Jerusalem Temple by the Chaldeans (2 Kings 25:13; Jer 27:19; 52:17).

The following verse is enigmatic (Burney 1903: 328; Montgomery and Gehman 1951: 461–62; Acroyd 1984: 253; Würthwein 1984: 391; Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 189); its end (v. 18b) *mipp^enêy melek ʾAššûr*, literally “from the face of the king of Assur” could well not be located in its original place, and should perhaps be read just after the beginning of v. 12a: “and the king came from Damascus.” Verse 18a is difficult to understand and is considered “unclear” or “obscure” by most commentators. It seems to refer to some “Sabbath covering” or eventually some “closing wall of a resting hall” (Naʾaman 1998: 347) (unless it is to be understood as the Septuagint: “the basis of a throne”; e.g., Mulder 1982) and some “entrance of the king into the outer (court?).” There might be some connection with Ezek 46:1–3 and some reference to a change in the official entrance of the king into the Temple during the feasts but it is difficult to be more precise.

The building (*bânâh*: v. 11a) of a new altar is told in more detail: King Ahaz ordered the new construction from Damascus by sending “the sketch of the altar and its plan (*ʾet-d^emût hammizbêah w^eet-tabnîto*)” to “Uriah the priest” (see also Isa 8:2). The text makes clear that this new altar is a copy of the altar that King Ahaz saw in Damascus. There has been much discussion among commentators to understand the nature of the original Damascus altar, with two possible interpretations:

- It was a new altar built by Tiglath-pileser III, or it was some kind of Assyrian altar for the cult of Assyrian deities (Kittel 1900: 270; Gressmann 1924: 324; Montgomery and Gehman 1951: 459–60; Gray 1970: 635).
- It was the central altar of the temple of Hadad, the main temple of Damascus (see 2 Kings 5:18: *bêyt rimmôn*) (Šanda 1912: 201; de Vaux 1967: II,285; Cogan 1974: 75; Acroyd 1984: 252; Würthwein 1984: 389; Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 192; Buis 1997: 247; Smelik 1997: 265).

Since the text is not clear on this point, commentators have been forced to use circumstantial evidence:

- Generally Assyria does not seem to have imposed cultic changes on vassal rulers and there is no mention in the neo-Assyrian texts of building new altars (Cogan 1974; Smelik 1997: 264–68; *pace* Spieckerman 1982).
- From v. 15 one may deduct that this was an altar for burnt-offerings/holocausts. This type of sacrifice seems to be unknown in Mesopotamia but well attested in the Levant.

These arguments—negative and positive—indicate that the Damascus altar, which was the prototype for the new altar in Jerusalem, was most probably the Aramaean

altar of the Hadad Temple. It is difficult to see in this new altar in Jerusalem an indication of political dependence on Aram or Assyria (Gray 1970: 635) and one wonders why King Ahaz decided to build a new altar! Apparently both the ancient (see 1 Kings 9:25) and the new altar (2 Kings 16:13) could be used for burnt-offerings (*‘ôlâh*) and grain-offerings (*minhâh*).

The text makes clear the main difference between this new altar in relation to the previous Solomonic one: The Solomonic bronze altar was small (see 1 Kings 8:64) while the new altar is “big” (*gâdôl*: v. 15). There was probably a difference in size (Ackroyd 1984: 252; Würthwein 1984: 390) and thus King Ahaz must go up upon it (end of 12b) to make offerings. This change indicates that from now on the priest was able to offer on the altar not only the royal offerings (*‘et-‘olat hammelek w’et minhâtô*) but also those of “all the people” (v. 15 where MT “of the land,” absent in the Septuagint, may be an addition: see Kittel 1900: 270; Gray 1970: 634; Würthwein 1984: 386).

This interpretation seems to agree with three other aspects:

1. Although the last phrase of verse 15 (*l’baqqêr*) is enigmatic and might be a reference to the consulting of animal entrails (Burney 1903: 327; Montgomery and Gehman 1951: 461; De Vaux 1967: II,285; Gray 1970: 637; Würthwein 1984: 390; Smelik 1997: 271–72; Sweeney 2007: 385; see already Calvin) or some kind of hepatoscopy, it is clear that King Ahaz kept the small altar for his own use (Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 189).
2. Both Ahaz and Jeroboam I (1 Kings 12:32–33) went “up upon the altar” to offer sacrifices. This similarity has sometimes been interpreted as the work of a Deuteronomist historian who wanted to condemn both kings (Würthwein 1984: 389–90). However, in contrast to 2 Chronicles 28:23–25, in 2 Kings 16, “Ahaz is not praised nor condemned” (Hobbs 1985: 216; see also Buis 1997: 249; Keel 2007: 381) for his cultic reform. The similarity can easily be explained by the fact that both kings were making offerings on big altars to be used for popular sacrifices (see Amos 4:4).
3. Although its details as well as political reasons are still discussed (Geva 2003; Na’aman 2007; Finkelstein 2008), the important augmentation of the Jerusalem population in the 8th century B.C.E., especially in its second half, is now generally recognized, as well as the expansion of the town on the western hill. The opening of the Temple to the general public during Jotham’s and Ahaz’s reigns is also to be understood in this general context of the development of Jerusalem.

Thus both kings—Jotham and his son Ahaz—were responsible for two new construction efforts connected with the Jerusalem Temple: a new gate and a new altar. These were probably monumental structures. Moreover, within less than ten years, they changed the function of the Temple of YHWH from a royal chapel that had been used by the members of the royal palace to the temple of the kingdom, open to the general public. From now on, not only could Judahites enter the sanctuary, but they also could take part in the offering of sacrifices. The Jerusalem sanctuary was transformed into a national Temple. Without these two preliminary architectural steps, the centralization of the cult, which had probably been enforced

by King Hezekiah (see, e.g., Münnich 2004; Finkelstein and Silberman 2006; *pace* Na'aman 1995; Edelman 2008) and reenacted again by King Josiah (e.g., Na'aman 2006), could not have been contemplated.

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The Origin and Date of the Volute Capitals from the Levant

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The Iron Age volute capitals (the so-called “Proto-Aeolic” or “Proto-Ionian” capitals) are among the most impressive and special finds discovered in archaeological excavations in Israel and Jordan.¹ The size of the capitals, their weight, the quality of their carving, and their impressive design provide an indication of their function in the gates and palaces of the ancient kingdoms of Israel, Judah, Moab, and Ammon. I dedicate this paper to my teacher and colleague, Prof. David Ussishkin, who wrote one of his shortest papers on the question of the location of two of the capitals discovered at Megiddo (Ussishkin 1970). I wish to thank him for the many lectures and seminars that enlightened my student years, for my first (and shortest!) paper, which I wrote under his guidance (Lipschits 1992), and for the good advice and incisive criticism of my work and ideas he has so generously offered over the years.

The volute capitals were first unearthed by Schumacher at Megiddo in 1903, and until the 1940s and 1950s they were referred to as “Proto-Ionian capitals.” Since then they have also been referred to as “Proto-Aeolic capitals” (for a thorough summary of the various names see Betancourt 1977: 4). The two names are borrowed from ancient Greek architecture, with the addition of “proto” to indicate that the capitals discovered in the East were antecedents of the Aeolic and Ionian ones, and that in this case the East influenced the West (Shiloh 1979: 90–91; Reich 1992: 212; Drinkard 2003). Shiloh, however, was convinced that no actual connection could be found between the two types of capitals in the two regions. The volute capitals that were found within the boundaries of the Kingdom of Israel are nearly two centuries earlier than the earliest ones that appeared in the classical world, and there are distinct differences in style between the two artistic and architectural worlds (Shiloh 1979: 88–91, and cf. Wesenberg 1971: 63–68; Mazar 1990: 474).

The volute capitals found in the Kingdom of Israel are also earlier than the ones found in the Phoenician world, and it is difficult to discern the origin of this architectural element in Phoenicia (as against a common view in research, e.g., Stern

Author's note: My thanks to Ido Koch, Keren Ras, and Nirit Kedem for their assistance in preparing this paper, and to Rodica Penchas for the drawings. An earlier Hebrew version of this paper appeared in *Cathedra* 131 (2009): 5–24.

1. The term “capital” used in this paper means both the free standing capitals (on columns) when both sides of the capital were carved, and the capitals that were integrated in the upper part of the walls, usually along the entrances, when only the outer phase of the capital was carved.

and Magen 2002: 50–52 with further literature). No volute capitals from the Iron Age have ever been found on the Phoenician coast, and most of the finds in the Phoenician world are dated to the Persian, Hellenistic, and later periods. It has been suggested that there were originally wooden capitals and that the appearance of capitals on clay and stone facades of sanctuary models, of the motif of “the lady in the window,” and of the many small objects (made of stone, shell, ivory, and metal) with the palmetto motif all indicate that the “tree of life” and palmetto were well-known artistic and architectural motifs (Stern 1995: 319–34). But this is insufficient to sustain the assumption that volute capitals were actually architectural elements in Phoenician palaces, gates, and open spaces, and it is certainly insufficient evidence for basing the claim that the Israelite capitals derived from the Phoenician coast (Betancourt 1977: 46–49, with further literature). Shiloh (1979: 90, and cf. Betancourt 1977: 17–23) defined the capitals from ancient Israel as a local development of an early artistic tradition that was widespread in the region, and Finkelstein (2000: 127) saw these capitals as the main original feature that evolved in the Northern Kingdom during the Omride dynasty, alongside the adoption of northern elements as well as elements that had existed in Palestine even earlier.

Shiloh (1979: 90–91) suggested naming the volute capitals “Palmetto” or “Israelite capitals,” but both these names are problematic. The palmetto (Heb. *tīmōrā*^h) is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible 19 times, usually in reference to engravings or plaits on straight surfaces (e.g., on walls or doors), and always in relation to the Temple. However, the volute capitals have consistently been found in archaeological contexts of city gates or palaces. It can be agreed that the palm tree motif is the main artistic inspiration for the decoration on the capitals (Stern and Magen 2002: 50–52), but it seems that the biblical palmetto/*tīmōrā*^h has no connection to the volute capitals. The name “Israelite capitals” might have been appropriate as long as scholars connected it with the reign of Solomon in the 10th century B.C.E. But because it is clear today that the volute capitals were first made during the Omride dynasty in the 9th century B.C.E. and continued in use in the Kingdoms of Judah, Moab, and Ammon (see below), even after the fall of the Kingdom of Israel, the neutral term “volute capital,” suggested by Ciaska (1961: 189–97), is preferable. This term describes the typical decoration of the capitals and their esthetic uniqueness (see also Wesenberg 1971: 65–68; Betancourt 1977: 4).

The Finds

Israel

Twenty-seven volute capitals have been unearthed in five cities of the Kingdom of Israel. Twelve capitals were found at Megiddo, seven at Samaria, three at Dan, two at Hazor, and three on Mount Gerizim.² Although some scholars still date the

2. This number differs from the total number of capitals presented by Shiloh (22 capitals that were found within the boundaries of the Kingdom of Israel) and quoted in later publications. The difference is due to the omission of Capital M-11 from Megiddo, which is not a capital at all (see below, n. 4), and the addition of three capitals found at Tel Dan and three capitals discovered on Mount Gerizim after Shiloh had published his corpus. Shiloh disregarded the possibility of

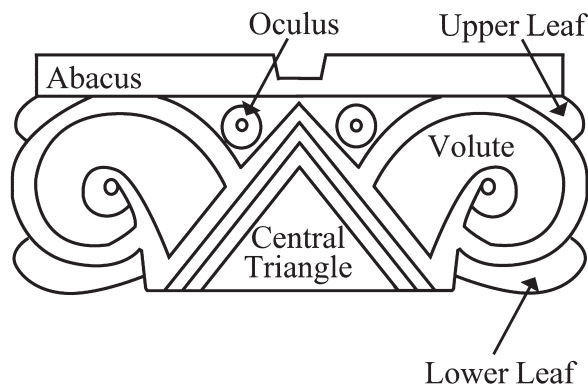


Fig. 1. Schematic drawing of a volute capital.

initial appearance of these capitals to the 10th century B.C.E., it seems today that they should be dated to the middle of the 9th, probably as part of widespread construction projects in the Kingdom of Israel at the time of the Omrides.³

The first volute capital found in Palestine was unearthed by Schumacher's excavations at Megiddo in 1903 (Schumacher 1908: 119, Fig. 178, and cf. Watzinger 1929: 78). Shiloh included in his corpus information concerning 11 additional capitals found at Megiddo.⁴ Two of them were found by Fisher in Structure 338, and according to the description they are identical (Fisher 1929: 71, Fig. 50; May 1935: Pl. X; Lamon and Shipton 1939: 55, Fig. 67).⁵ Two additional volute capitals were found in the southern part of the site, in secondary use in structures associated with Stratum III (May 1935: Pl. XI; Lamon and Shipton 1939: 15, Figs. 17, 122; Ussishkin 1970: 213–15),⁶ and two more capitals (Shiloh's M-8 and M-9)⁷ and a fragment of a third (M-6), which includes a little more than its left half, were found

another existing capital, which is described in Macalister's report on the excavations at Gezer. Hints indicating that a capital had been uncovered in the gate area can be found in Macalister's preliminary reports and in his final reports, although no photo or drawing has been found. Brandl (1984: 173–76), however, suggested the possibility that Gezer is another Israelite city in which these capitals were present.

3. Shiloh (1979: 20–21) attributed four of the capitals found at Megiddo to Solomon's palace from the 10th century B.C.E., and other scholars followed suit (see, e.g., Reich 1992: 180; Stern 1992: 258). Nevertheless, it seems today that these capitals should be seen as part of the widespread building projects that took place in the Kingdom of Israel during the 9th century B.C.E. (see already Finkelstein 2000: 120–21, and cf. Stern and Magen 2002: 50).

4. I do not take into account the "miniature" found at Megiddo; see Lamon and Shipton 1939: 55, n. 37; Loud 1948: Pl. 270: 1. This capital was included in Shiloh's corpus (1979: 4) as number M-11, although he was aware that it differs from the others in the type of stone, and especially in size—less than a third of the average height of the other capitals and less than a quarter of their average width.

5. One of the two capitals is complete and is kept at the Rockefeller Museum (No. 36.2189), while the second, fragmentary capital is kept at the site. Both capitals are bifacial.

6. The two capitals are very similar, and they are the widest found in the territory of the Northern Kingdom, although they are identical to the others in terms of height and depth (Shiloh 1979: 3, 15, Table 2).

7. The second volute capital (Shiloh's M-9) is bifacial.

near Structure 338, in an architectural and stratigraphical context similar to that of the previous capitals (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 55, n. 37; Shiloh 1979: 3).⁸ A large fragment of a bifacial volute capital (M-10) was published by Shiloh (1976: 67–68; 1979: 3). Its provenance is unknown. Shiloh (1976: 68, Pl. 2; 1979: 4) also published another fragment (M-13) of a different volute capital found next to it. An additional fragment (M-12 according to Shiloh 1979: 4), the provenance of which is unknown, is mentioned in the University of Chicago archives.⁹ The last volute capital from Megiddo was purchased in 1932 by the Rockefeller Museum (M-7 according to Shiloh 1979: 3).

In the Samaria excavations three almost identical volute capitals were unearthed near the southeastern part of the acropolis, which is associated with Strata II–I (Crowfoot et al. 1942: 14–15, Pl. XXIX:2, Fig. 6); all were in secondary use. Four fragments of three additional capitals were found in secondary use embedded in walls and structures from the Persian, pre-Hellenistic, and Hellenistic periods northeast of the acropolis (Crowfoot et al. 1942: 14, 16, Pl. XXXVII:1; Shiloh 1976: 69–70, Pl. 3; Betancourt 1977: 34–35). Shiloh traced an additional fragment of a volute capital belonging to the same type embedded in the Roman theater (Shiloh 1976: 69–70, Pls. 4–5).

At Hazor two nearly identical volute capitals were discovered (Yadin et al. 1961, Pl. 48:1, 49:1–3; 362; 363).¹⁰ They were found in secondary use in Area B, Room 3264, which is associated with Stratum VII, and it is thought that they were in primary use in the fort of Stratum VIII (3090) (Betancourt 1977: 27–29; Shiloh 1979: 1–2).

Three volute capitals are known from Tel Dan; they were found after Shiloh had published his catalogue and were thus not included in it.¹¹ In the 1984 excavation season a fragment of a capital was found in secondary use embedded in the upper gate at the site (Biran 1985: 186, Pl. 24:D; 1994: 241–42, Fig. 201).¹² In addition, a complete volute capital was unearthed in the 1992 excavation season, embedded in the floor south of the entrance to the gateway (Area A, Locus 5133) (Biran 1994: 241–42, Photo 201).¹³ In the same location, a fragment of another capital was found, which was not published and is kept today at the Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem. The complete volute capital and the two fragments found at Tel Dan are

8. These volute capitals are significantly smaller and closer to the average width of most capitals discovered in the Kingdom of Israel.

9. This capital was also found in secondary use, in Structure 1052 in Locus 1051 in the northern part of Area AA, associated with Stratum II.

10. The one difference between the two capitals is that one is carved only on one side (Shiloh's H-1), while the other is bifacial (Shiloh's H-2).

11. I would like to thank Dr. David Ilan for this information, which has been only partially published by Biran (see below).

12. This fragment was embedded in Wall 6033 (B. 18451) and can be found today at the main entrance to the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, the Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem.

13. In the publications there is only a reference to this capital and a photograph of it, with no further discussion. This volute capital can be found today in the official residence of the President of Israel.

similar, even if not identical, to Shiloh's type C, of which a capital was also found at Megiddo (Shiloh's M-10). This type differs from most of the other capitals found at Samaria, Hazor, and Megiddo (Shiloh 1979: 3, 18–19).

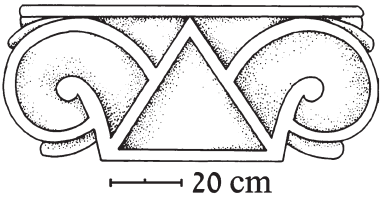
Two almost complete volute capitals and a small fragment of a third were discovered on Mount Gerizim. They were found on the eastern slope of the site, below the flight of steps that led into the temple (Locs 7019 and 7035), amid a large concentration of fallen stones, together with pottery dated mainly to the Persian and Hellenistic periods (Stern and Magen 2002: 49–50). Stern and Magen correctly classified these volute capitals with the Iron Age capitals, even though they represent a unique type unlike the other capitals known from the Omride kingdom. All the Gerizim capitals lack the typical central triangle, have numerous spiraling volutes (more than all the other capitals), and have some other additional stylistic features (Stern and Magen 2002: 50–52). Since the earliest structure on Mount Gerizim was established in the Persian period, and we have no information about the production of volute capitals in Samaria during this period (Stern 2001: 18–31), we can accept Stern and Magen's hypothesis that these capitals were brought to Mount Gerizim from a public building (not necessarily a temple, as they speculated) in Shechem that was destroyed by the Assyrians at the end of the 8th century B.C.E. (Stern and Magen 2002: 55–56). We may speculate that this structure was built in the well-known architectural style typical of the Omrides of the 9th century B.C.E., similar to Samaria, Megiddo, Hazor, and Dan.

To sum up, it is possible that the volute capitals were a central feature in the grand architecture of the Kingdom of Israel starting from the middle of the 9th century B.C.E. It is reasonable to assume that all 27 known capitals were in use from this period until the destruction of the kingdom by the Assyrians in the last third of the 8th century B.C.E.

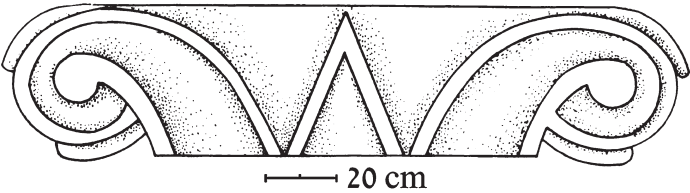
Despite the similarities between the volute capitals found in these cities, each urban center had a different style with unique and distinctive elements (Betancourt 1977: 44–48). The two capitals found at Hazor are unique in their appearance (and were defined by Shiloh as type D). The capitals from Samaria resemble those found at Megiddo, but still differ from them (Shiloh's type A3), with greater emphasis on the central circle of the volute, and without the abacus. The capitals found at Megiddo present three unique types which have no parallel at other sites (Shiloh's types A1, A2, and B), and the capitals discovered at Tel Dan belong to type C, of which one fragment is known also from Megiddo, while the capitals from Gerizim represent a different and unique type.

In this context, we should mention the assemblage of bullae discovered recently at the City of David (Reich, Shukron, and Lerner 2007: 156–57). These bullae are well dated to the end of the 9th century B.C.E., and some of them bear patterns of volute capitals. Architectural motifs are rarely found on Semitic seals, and although there are some known seals which bear palmetto motifs, and there is even one bulla with a detailed motif of a column with a volute capital, there are very few parallels for detailed volute capital designs (Sass 1993: 208–9, and Figs. 53–57, on p. 207; see also Uehlinger 1993: note on p. 275). It may be assumed that the bullae found in

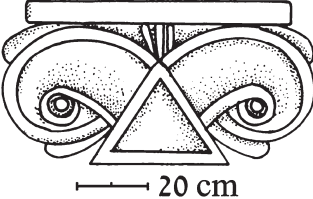
Megiddo and Samaria



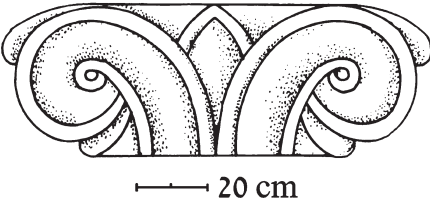
Megiddo



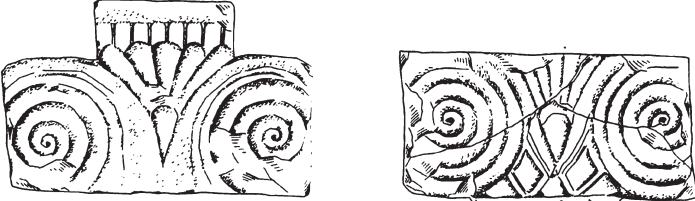
Megiddo



Hazor



Mount Gerizim



No Scale Provided

Fig. 2. The different types of Omride volute capitals

the City of David date from the period in which the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel were closely connected. This would indicate an acquaintance with the capitals that were common in the Northern Kingdom at that time. We may add the pattern of the volute capitals on the bullae to the well-known depiction of capitals on three engraved ivories from Megiddo and Samaria (Guy 1938, Pl. 172:1; Crowfoot and Crowfoot 1938, Pl. XX: II: 1), and from 'Aroer (Biran 1993: 91).

Judah

Ramat Raḥel

Ten volute capitals were unearthed in Aharoni's excavations at Ramat Raḥel. Two complete capitals were found in the palace courtyard of Stratum VA, near the southern casemate wall. The first (Shiloh's RR-1) was uncovered in Locus 229 (Aharoni 1956: 141, Pl. 22: B, 27: B; Moscati, Ciaska, and Garbini 1960: Pl. 6; Shiloh 1979: 8). The second (Shiloh's RR-2) was discovered nearby, embedded in a wall dated to the Persian period (Aharoni 1956: 142; Shiloh 1979: 8). An additional complete capital (Shiloh's RR-8) was found in the eastern part of the palace courtyard, near Gate 375 (Aharoni 1962: 28–29, Pl. 42:1; Shiloh 1979: 9). The last complete capital (Shiloh's RR-10) was found in secondary use in Columbarium 800 (Aharoni 1964: 54, 66, Fig. 3, Pl. 16:1; Shiloh 1979: 9).¹⁴ Fragments of five additional capitals were found in the palace courtyard: One fragment (Shiloh's RR-3) was unearthed near the casemate wall in the southern part of the courtyard, next to the two complete capitals that were found there (Aharoni 1964: 142; Shiloh 1979: 8). Another fragment (Shiloh's RR-4) was discovered in Square V16 in the northern part of the courtyard, south of Locus 281 (Aharoni 1962: 14–15, Fig. 13:2, Pl. 11:1; Shiloh 1979: 8). Three other fragments (Shiloh's RR-6, RR-7 and RR-9) were excavated in the eastern part of the palace courtyard, one of them embedded in a wall of the Roman bathhouse, and another embedded in a wall associated with Stratum IVA, near Gate 375 in Locus 396 (Aharoni 1964: 28–29, Pl. 42:2; Shiloh 1979: 8–9). An additional fragment of a volute capital (Shiloh's RR-5) was discovered by Yehudah Dayan, embedded in an old fence at the western slope of the site (Aharoni 1960: 95, Fig. 1, 11, Pl. 8:1; 1962: 14–15, Fig. 13:1, Pl. 11:1; Shiloh 1979: 8).

Three more fragments of volute capitals were found during the renewed excavations at Ramat Raḥel. One fragment was discovered on the surface during the 2005 excavation season (Area B1, Square B157, registration no. 2022/50). This is a small fragment, 17.5 cm long and 12.5 cm wide. It includes part of the upper capital, which is a typical component of the capitals from Ramat Raḥel (Type E according to Shiloh), and the right concentric circle. Another fragment was found under a stone collapse during the 2007 excavation season (Area C1 south, Locus 824, registration no. 3508/50). This collapse was composed of large stones, which were part of a destruction level dated to the end of the Persian or the beginning of the Hellenistic period. The maximum length of this fragment is 25 cm and its maximum width is 20 cm. It is a part of the lower left leaf at the base of the capital, and the lower part

14. This volute capital, too, can be found today in the official residence of the President of Israel.

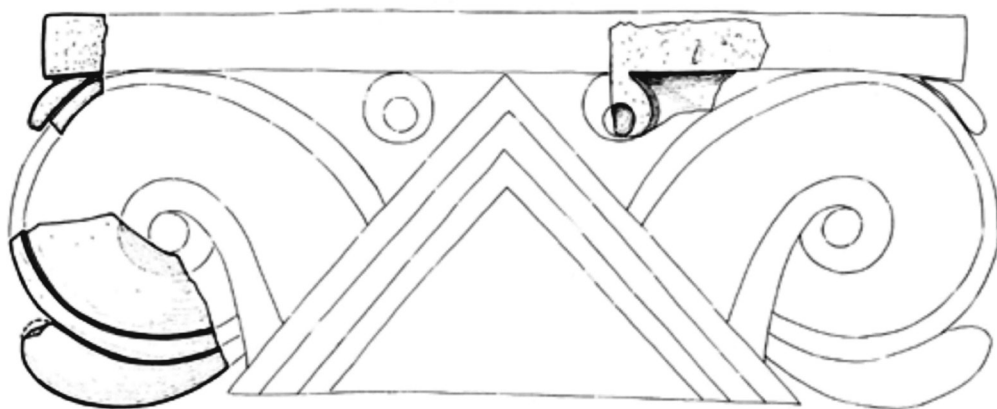


Fig. 3. Reconstruction of the location of the three new fragments of volute capitals discovered at Ramat Raḥel.

of the volute. A third fragment was discovered during the 2008 excavation season (Area B2, Locus 10064, registration no. 2482/50). It is part of the upper left corner of a capital, and includes the left side of the abacus, the complete upper leaf, and part of the upper side of the volute.

These three fragments can be added to some of the fragments discovered by Aharoni, and until a detailed study is made of all the fragments discovered at Ramat Raḥel, there is no way to determine whether there are more than 10 volute capitals at the site.

Two other architectural elements discovered at Ramat Raḥel are noteworthy. The first is a set of window balustrades carved in limestone, discovered by Aharoni in a pile of well-carved, smooth ashlar stones near the northwest corner of the palace. Three small, round columns were discovered there (15 cm in diameter and 23 cm high), with a “falling leaves” pattern sculpted on them. The small columns were topped with beautifully sculpted, joined capitals, each with two falling palmettos flanking an egg-shaped central design. The capitals were attached to the columns by metal fittings, and they have holes on their upper part for attaching them to the windowsill.¹⁵ The second item is a carved frieze decorated with small columns with elegant capitals, excavated in 1931 by Maisler and Stekelis (Maisler 1934: 14–15; Stekelis 1934: 27–29, and Pl. C). A similar frieze was discovered in secondary use during the renewed excavations, and there is no doubt that these items belong to the same building complex in which the volute capitals were found.

15. The data on the window balustrade was discovered in Aharoni's documents from the 1959–62 excavation seasons (and cf. Aharoni 1964: Pl. 44–48). According to these registrations, more fragments of balustrade columns were discovered in the northeastern part of the palace, indicating that there were several such windows. The restored window balustrade is on display at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. A fragment of a window balustrade similar to the one found at Ramat Raḥel was found in Shiloh's excavations in the City of David (see below). Additional fragments were discovered in the renewed excavations at Ramat Raḥel, and will be published in the final report of these excavations.

Shiloh (1979: 10, 21) based his dating of the Ramat Raḥel volute capitals on Aharoni's suggestion to date the beginning of Stratum VB at the site to the second half of the 9th century B.C.E.,¹⁶ and on Yadin's suggestion (1962: 108, n. 90; 1973: 59–66) to date the palace even earlier, to the time of Queen Athaliah, who reigned over Judah in the mid-9th century B.C.E.¹⁷ Contrary to Aharoni, who dated all the capitals to Stratum VA and ruled out the possibility of their secondary use (from Stratum VB), Shiloh suggested that their state of preservation indicated that they might have originated as part of the building complex of Stratum VB, and like many of the building stones of this stratum, had the same fate of secondary use in Stratum VA. In his opinion, these stone capitals appeared parallel to their use in the Kingdom of Israel (Shiloh 1979: 21).

We can no longer accept this view (and cf. Stern 2001: 167). At Ramat Raḥel not a single pottery sherd was found that could be dated to the 9th century B.C.E., or even to a pottery horizon earlier than that which characterizes Judah at the end of the 8th century B.C.E. Aharoni already dated the earlier stratum, VB, to the late 8th century B.C.E. He associated few architectural remains with this stratum, and reconstructed a small fort surrounded by a casemate wall and near it a private dwelling, agricultural terraces, and a stone quarry. Most of the finds associated with this stratum were discovered in the fill that was part of the construction of Stratum VA, and in it were many *lmlk* and “private” stamp impressions. Aharoni dated Stratum VA to the end of the 7th century B.C.E. and reconstructed a royal fort and near it a courtyard surrounded by a wall. He associated the volute capitals with this splendid, ashlar-built fort (1964: 59–66).

The detailed study of the data from Aharoni's excavations (Lipschits forthcoming), and the renewed four seasons of excavations at the site (for preliminary publications of the 2005–7 seasons see Lipschits, Oeming, Gadot, and Arubas 2006; 2009), may support Aharoni's position, which was followed by Barkay (2006: 34–44; see also the additional editorial note in Aharoni 1992: 1484, and Stern 2001: 69). There were clearly two Iron Age strata at Ramat Raḥel. The earlier one (Aharoni's Vb) included a small fort in the western part of the site with some structures attached to it on the east. The white floor of the palace, where most of the capitals were discovered, as well as many of the structures attached to the floor and the casemate wall, including the northwestern corner of the palace where the window

16. From the outset of excavations at Ramat Raḥel, Aharoni noted the similarity between the plan and architectural details of the Ramat Raḥel palace and the royal acropolis of the kings of Israel at Samaria. He further stressed that the two sites were built on hills that had not been previously inhabited (Aharoni 1956: 139–40, 151). In the early stages of the excavation it was suggested that the palace at Ramat Raḥel was erected in the 8th century B.C.E., and Aharoni even tried to identify it with Uzziah's (Azariah's) *בֵּית הַחֹפְשִׁית* (*bêt haHopšît*) mentioned in 2 Kings 15:5 (1960: 24, and cf. Aharoni 1962: 15, 50, 60; 1964: 30, 38, 119, 122). Aharoni changed his mind after the *lmlk* stamp impressions and pottery dated to the late 8th century were discovered under the palace floors (1962: 60).

17. Yigael Yadin also based his opinion on the close resemblance between the plan and architectural details of the Ramat Raḥel palace and the royal acropolis of the kings of Israel at Samaria, and suggested dating the palace of Ramat Raḥel to the time of Queen Athaliah, because of her origins in the House of Omri, which ruled the Northern Kingdom of Israel from Samaria.

balustrades and remains of one fragment of a volute capital were discovered, are all part of the second phase of the site (Aharoni's Va), dated to the 7th century B.C.E.

That being the case, we may conclude that some time passed, perhaps even a decade or two or longer, from the destruction of the Israelite cities, in which the volute capitals were first created (some 150 years earlier) as a central architectural element, until the palace at Ramat Raḥel was built. In other words, the typological differences between the volute capitals found in the Kingdom of Israel and those found at Ramat Raḥel also indicate a chronological gap (Stern 2001: 258, and see below).

The City of David

Two fragments of one volute capital were discovered by Kenyon during her excavations in the City of David (Kenyon 1963: 16, Pl. VIII: B; 1967: 59, Pl. 20; 46). They were found out of context in an accumulation of ashlar stones (Area P, Square A XVIII). Although not identical in proportions and quality, this capital is in many ways similar to the ones found at Ramat Raḥel (for a description of the capital, see Prag 1987: 121–22; Betancourt 1977: 38; Shiloh noted that the quality of this capital was the highest of all the capitals found in Palestine). The ashlar accumulation in which the capital fragments were discovered was uncovered below a level dated by Kenyon to the 5th–3rd centuries B.C.E. The conclusion was that in any case this accumulation was part of a secondary use context, and hence could not be used to pinpoint the date of the volute capital or the structure it was used in (Prag 1987: 122; on the possibility that this volute capital originated from a structure recently unearthed on top of the eastern slopes of the City of David, see E. Mazar 2007: 13–18). The date of the capital could be determined only by a typological comparison to the other capitals known from Judah, in the nearby site of Ramat Raḥel. Surprisingly, Kenyon compared the City of David volute capital with those found in Samaria and Megiddo and did not even mention the items found at Ramat Raḥel, although they were already known by the time of her publications.¹⁸ On the basis of the typological comparison to the volute capitals found in Samaria and Megiddo, Kenyon dated the capital found by her to the reign of Solomon. Although the northern capitals and the capital found in Jerusalem bear the same main features, the latter is nevertheless very different and reflects a different stage in the development of the volute capitals. The concentric circles (oculi) on both sides of the central triangle carved in three parallel lines under the abacus are the main characteristics of this typological phase in the development process of the volute capitals; they do not appear on the 9th century B.C.E. capitals from the Kingdom of Israel.

Betancourt and Shiloh already noticed the fact that the closest parallels to the capital from the City of David are the ones found at Ramat Raḥel and Khirbet el-Mudeibi' in Moab. Betancourt (1977: 38) argued that the volute capital from Jerusalem should be dated to the middle of the 7th century B.C.E., while Shiloh (1979: 11) argued that it should be dated to the 9th century B.C.E. Since a date of the Ramat

18. In addition to the literature mentioned above, see also Kenyon's later publication: 1968: 97–111. Cf. Shiloh 1979: 10–11.

Raḥel volute capitals in the late 8th or early 7th century B.C.E. is now well founded, there is no justification for the early dating of the capital from the City of David. In view of the typological parallels, the volute capital from Jerusalem should also be dated to the late 8th or early 7th century B.C.E.

Weippert (1985: 22–26) attempted to identify among the finds of Crowfoot and Fitzgerald's excavation another capital (Crowfoot and Fitzgerald 1929, Pl. XVIII:4), but Prag (1987: 121) emphasized that this capital was a late and different type. However, Prag quoted Vincent's description (1911: 29) of the accumulation of ashlar stones that was collected for building by people from Silwan, and in it a stone capital of the Greek type, and possibly fragments of a window balustrade. Three photos from the archive of the École Biblique show two capitals, described by Prag as "incomplete," in an accumulation of stones near the monument of "Zechariah's Tomb" (Prag 1987: 122). These capitals are, however, of a late style, and should be dated to the 1st century B.C.E. (Prag 1987: 121). Apart from this, Prag (based on Shiloh 1985: 135–36) identified in Shiloh's finds in Area E1 the bottom part of a decorated column, which was in her opinion part of a window balustrade of the style known from Ramat Raḥel. This object was attributed to Strata 10–11, and dated to the 7th century B.C.E.; however, in her opinion it might have originated in an earlier stratum (Level 12?), probably in the 8th century B.C.E. To the same assemblage Prag suggested attributing four small incense altars found in the "Bullae House" in Area G, which were dated to the 7th century B.C.E. (Shiloh 1984: 18–19, Pl. 34: 2). In her opinion (Prag 1987: 122), it is reasonable to assume that these are column bases, and the hole in the center of their upper part was used to adjoin a higher element in a window balustrade, of a less advanced type than that found in Area E1. This assumption of Prag is difficult to accept; the finishing quality of these stone columns does not resemble other stone window balustrades, and they are not decorated.

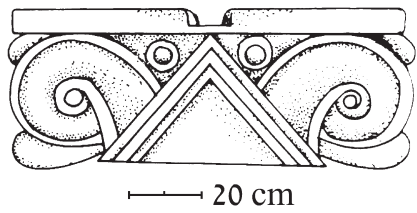
Moab

Khirbet el-Mudeibi'

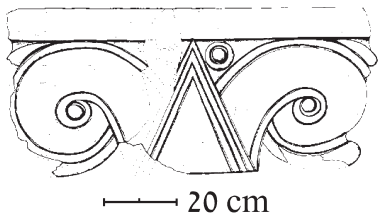
The citadel at Khirbet el-Mudeibi' is located about 21 km southeast of el-Kerak, between the "Kings Highway" and the desert road, at a point dominating a central wadi (Fajj al-'Usaykir), which connects these two main routes (Mattingly and Pace 2007: 155, and Map 3 on p. 156). Since the time of Glueck's surveys, one volute capital, found on the surface, has been known from Mudeibi' (Glueck 1933: 13, Fig. 2; 1934: 67–68, Fig. 26).¹⁹ Until a few years ago, it was still in the same location in the site (Negueruela 1982: 395), but recently it was removed and stored in the storages of the Jordanian antiquities department. Shiloh pointed out that this capital is the tallest of all those found in Palestine and the second longest after capital M5 from Megiddo. It has slightly different proportions from those later found at Ramat Raḥel and Jerusalem, but since its characteristics are very similar to the Judahite capitals, Shiloh categorized it as belonging to the same type (Shiloh

19. Glueck described the location of the capital inside the eastern gate of the fort, and published its exact measurements. He saw this capital as a parallel of the ones he knew from Samaria and Megiddo, as well as the relief from Ramat Raḥel published by Maisler.

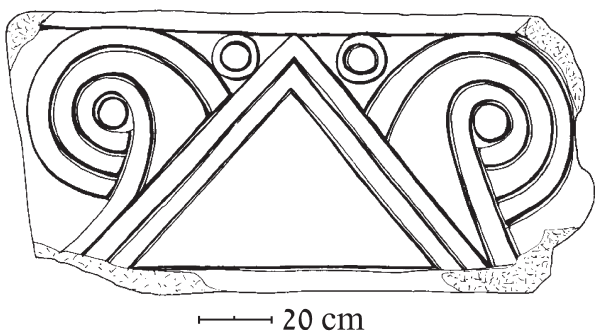
Ramat Raḥel



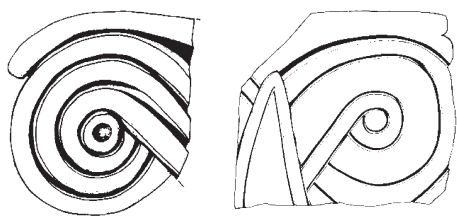
City of David



el-Mudeibi‘ and Ain Sara



Amman



No Scale Provided

Fig. 4. The different types of volute capitals from the Kingdoms of Judah, Moab, and Ammon.

1979: 11, 19; see Negueruela's remark [1982: 395] concerning the photo published by Shiloh).

Three additional fragments of volute capitals were found in August 1982, during a tour conducted by Negueruela at the site.²⁰ Another complete capital was discovered in 1997, during excavations carried out at the outer gate of the citadel (Square N-9 in Area B) (Drinkard 1997: 249–50; Mattingly and Pace 2007: 157). Two of the volute capitals that were discovered and described by Negueruela in 1982 were fully exposed during the excavation season conducted in 2001 (for a detailed description of the excavations see Mattingly and Pace 2007: 155–58).²¹

The citadel at Khirbet el-Mudeibi' was built of basalt stones, although both the outer and inner gates were made of limestone, and so were the five volute capitals that probably formed part of the entrance complex. Since the last capital found at this site was discovered face down under the supporting wall of the four-chamber gate and as its width (1.65 m) is identical to that of the supporting wall, Drinkard reconstructed its original position at the top of this wall; in his opinion it supported a wooden beam. He attributed the collapse of the gates to an earthquake (Drinkard 1997: 249; Wade and Mattingly 2003: 73–74).²²

Negueruela (1982: 399–401) already described the main characteristics of the five volute capitals discovered at Khirbet el-Mudeibi', as well as the differences between them and the ones from Ramat Raḥel and the City of David: The central triangle of the Mudeibi' capitals is made up of two parallel lines and not three as in Ramat Raḥel and the City of David, and the upper and lower leaves flanking the volutes are missing. There is also the noticeable difference in the proportions of the different parts of the capitals. In the Khirbet el-Mudeibi' capitals the central triangle is much wider and takes up more space than in the Ramat Raḥel and City of David capitals. The volutes in the Mudeibi' capitals are smaller and pushed to the sides. However, the similarities in style between the capitals found at Khirbet el-Mudeibi' and the ones found at Ramat Raḥel and the City of David are obvious: All display the main concept of an upper and lower frame (the abacus and the base), a triangle in the middle of the capital, volutes on either side of the triangle, and oculi on both sides of the upper part of it. These similarities indicate that the stonemasons chiseled three different interpretations with the same concept, the same outlines, or even following the same basic model.

The date of the fortress at Khirbet el-Mudeibi' is not certain. Glueck dated the pottery which he gathered at the site to the 8th century B.C.E. but assumed that it was established earlier (1934: 68). Shiloh accepted this assumption and dated the Mudeibi' fortress to the 9th century B.C.E., similarly to his dating of the volute

20. According to Negueruela (1982: 395–96, and Fig. 1), the first fragment was found about a meter to the west of Glueck's volute capital, the second one was found about two meters west of the first one, and the third fragment was found in secondary use in a late repair of the inner wall, about a meter west of the second one.

21. For a detailed description of the excavations at the site, see Mattingly and Pace 2007: 155–58.

22. For the original position of the volute capitals, see Drinkard's reconstruction in his internet site (<http://www.vkrp.org/studies/historical/capitals/info/location-function.asp>), Photo 8 and Figure 4.

capitals from Ramat Raḥel and Jerusalem (1979: 11, 13 n. 83, 21). Stern accepted the 8th century B.C.E. dating and interpreted the site as a fortress on the eastern border of Moab before the Assyrian takeover of this area (2001: 263–64). Naʾaman also accepted the dating of the site to the 8th century B.C.E., and added the possibility that it was part of an alignment of fortresses constructed by the Assyrians along this strategic path connecting the northern and southern parts of Moab (2001: 270, n. 5), while Finkelstein suggested that it should be dated to the end of the Iron Age II (2000: 126, 127 n. 12).

In my opinion, there is insufficient evidence, even in the latest publications, for a discussion on the date of the Khirbet el-Mudeibiʿ fortress. And even though the wooden beams found in the gate area provided a radiocarbon date of 760 B.C.E. (± 40 years), it is doubtful if this dating of the beams can support the establishment of the site to the 8th century B.C.E. From Mattingly and Pace's summary it is clear that the charcoal found in Area D supplied a dating of Iron Age II up to the Persian period. Despite all of the above data, it seems that there is no conclusive archaeological evidence to indicate the date when the gate was erected. The typological parallels of the capitals and the architectural parallels of the fortress indicate a date no earlier than the late 8th or the beginning of the 7th century B.C.E. The layout of the fortress, the vast and unusual investment in the quality of the construction, and the appearance of the volute capitals indicate the unusual nature of this site in the Moabite architectural world. It therefore allows the connection between the construction of this site and the appearance of the Assyrians in the area and their activity on the frontier of Palestine and Transjordan (see below).

ʿAin-Sara

An additional volute capital was located in 1983 in secondary use embedded in a modern outdoor garden wall of the ʿAin-Sara park and restaurant, west of el-Kerak (Donner and Knauf 1985: 429–30; Herr 1997: 173). The capital was inspected by the members of the el-Kerak research expedition, and according to their publication, this capital, aside from a double line at its base, is very similar to the ones found at Khirbet el-Mudeibiʿ. The provenance of this capital is unknown, but it appears to have been found in the area (see Drinkard's detailed description in <http://www.vkrp.org/studies/historical/capitals/info/capitals-recently-found.asp>).

The great similarity of this volute capital to the ones found at Mudeibiʿ (the sides of the triangle have a double outline, its base is separated from the sides, and the abacus has no apparent notch), and the local characteristics that each type of capital displays in each location where it was found in Israel, Judah, and Moab supports the assumption that it originated in el-Kerak and not in Khirbet el-Mudeibiʿ. It is logical to assume that as in the case of Ramat Raḥel and Jerusalem, in Moab, too, there were great similarities between the volute capitals located at the fortress and in the capital city; at the same time they are not identical.

Ammon

Drinkard reported the identification of a fragment of a volute capital in secondary use in the lower citadel of Amman, east of the remains of the Roman temple.

This fragment was discovered during Najjar's excavations at the citadel in 1993. It was embedded in a wall dating to the Ummayyad period (Najjar 1999: 109). According to Drinkard (cited above), this fragment is of the same type as that found at Khirbet el-Mudeibi⁶ and 'Ain-Sara. The fragment preserves most of the left volute, and is unique in that it is bifacial.

A second fragment of a volute capital was displayed in 2001 in the parking lot of the Amman Fort museum, having been uncovered on an unknown occasion in excavations inside the citadel. This fragment is of a different type from the others found at Ammon and Moab. The central triangle here is much narrower and has only one outline, and the volute as a whole is much wider. This type of capital lacks oculi, and has features more comparable to Shiloh's type A (Drinkard, cited above). It is difficult to suggest the date and origin of this fragment.

Prag attempted to identify elements of window balustrades at Ammon, and connected them to the architectural style of the phase of the decorated capitals with an image of a woman's head chiseled in limestone. The woman's head was found in secondary use embedded in the Hellenistic construction of the citadel of Amman, and was dated to the 8th or 7th century B.C.E. (Zayadine 1973: 27, 33–35, Pl. XVIII:1; Bordreuil 1973: 37–39; Prag 1987: 122–23). In Prag's opinion, objects such as this were used in a similar way to the stone columns which supported the window balustrades. The fact that they are similar in height in her opinion, reinforces this proposal (Prag 1987: 123; Stern 2001: 245). This reconstruction is highly hypothetical, as there are no known parallels of window balustrades with chiseled heads of women instead of supporting columns.

The Appearance of the Volute Capitals in Ammon, Moab, and Judah

Prag (1987: 126) observed the artistic and decorative similarities that existed between Judah, Ammon, and Moab at the end of the Iron Age, especially in the royal architecture, which integrated influences from the royal Assyrian style. She noted, however, that despite many similarities that characterize the area as a whole, the architectural and sculptural style in Ammon differs from that which was customary in Moab and Judah.

In seven of the eight Ammonite and Moabite volute capitals, the similarity in style to the Judahite capitals is obvious; only one fragment from the Ammon citadel has parallels in the types that characterize the volute capitals from the Kingdom of Israel, which are dated to an earlier period. Yet there are a few stylistic similarities that are unique to the volute capitals from Moab and Ammon and distinguish them from the Judahite capitals: the sides of the central triangle have a double rather than triple outline; it has a clear base line separated from the sides (and in the stone capital from 'Ain Sara there are two base lines); in most cases the abacus is thin or absent and in any case has no apparent notch; the volutes were made of three lines; and it seems that the most significant difference is in the proportions between the central triangle and the volutes.

Drinkard's reasonable assumption is that the unique characteristics that distinguish between the Judahite and the Ammonite and Moabite volute capitals indicate different local manufacturing traditions. In view of the uniqueness of each city in the Kingdom of Israel and the differences between the Judahite and the Israelite capitals, we can agree with this assumption, even though the similarities between most of the Judahite, Moabite, and Ammonite capitals indicate a closeness in style and chronology, with local variants which can be explained by the existence of two principal workshops.²³

There are distinct typological differences between the volute capitals found in the Kingdom of Israel and the ones found in the Kingdoms of Judah, Moab, and Ammon, and we may assume that there is also a chronological difference between them. The southern capitals appeared only some time after the main cities of Israel had been destroyed. Scholars have commented on the typological differences between the "northern" volute capitals and the "southern" group.²⁴ However, these scholars did not sufficiently stress the chronological differences and the question of the relationship between the two groups. This is an essential issue that needs to be clarified.

The appearance of the volute capitals in Judah could be interpreted as a phenomenon introduced by Israelite refugees.²⁵ Yet aside from the fundamental difficulty in assuming the transfer of Israelite traditions from the Assyrian province of Samaria to Judah, which was at this time an Assyrian vassal kingdom, this explanation is problematic when applied to the same phenomenon which also took place in the Kingdoms of Moab and Ammon.

Prag suggested the possibility of Israelite influence in Moab and Ammon during the 8th century B.C.E., and from there to Judah (1987: 126). This assumption is possible, although unlikely, because there is no evidence that the volute capitals in Ammon and Moab predate the ones from Judah.²⁶ In any case, the fortress at Khirbet el- Mudeibi^c is unusual in character, does not reflect the local architectural and artistic characteristics, is far from the Moabite capital, and represents—like the palace/citadel at Ramat Raḥel—a unique phenomenon in the kingdom.

In the two explanations given above for the appearance of the volute capitals in Judah, Ammon and Moab, no attention has been drawn to the fact that they are *uncharacteristic* of the local architecture in these kingdoms. Their appearance has neither precedent nor permanence. These stone capitals appeared mainly in two structures that can be interpreted as fortresses or administrative or governmental

23. Stern (2001: 264) explained these similarities as an indication to the powerful Judahite influence over Moab before the appearance of the Assyrians. I question this theory from both the chronological and the historical perspectives. See below.

24. In addition to the bibliography listed above, see Betancourt 1977: 44–48; Shiloh 1979: 14–25; Stern and Magen 2002: 50.

25. This was the explanation offered by Barkay (2006: 39), who accepted Aharoni's division into two Iron-Age Strata (VB and VA) at Ramat Raḥel, and argued that the architectural similarities between the stone capitals from Ramat Raḥel and those from the Omride kingdom was due to Israelite refugees who arrived in Judah after the destruction of Samaria and brought with them this architectural tradition.

26. Also, only one of the volute capitals from the citadel of Amman can point to direct Israeli influence, while all the other capitals are closer to the Judahite style.

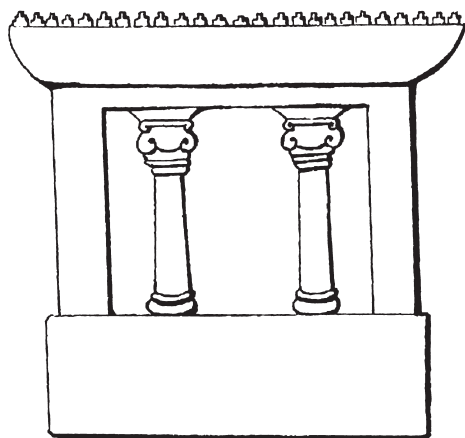


Fig. 5. Illustration based on the 12th slab of the hunting scene in Room 7 of the northwestern palace at Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad).

centers, and their appearance is insignificant in the capital cities of these kingdoms (one stone capital from Jerusalem, probably one from el-Kerak, and two fragments from the citadel of Amman).

An additional aspect that has not been sufficiently examined is that of a chronological relationship between the appearance of these volute capitals and the appearance of the Assyrians in the Levant, and the possibility that at the same time, the end of the 8th and the beginning of the 7th centuries B.C.E., there was a specific and limited influence of the volute capitals on the royal Assyrian architecture as well.

In view of the foregoing, I would like to propose another explanation for the volute capitals from Judah, Moab, and Ammon. I suggest that these capitals gained prestige with the Assyrian destruction of the Kingdom of Israel. In fact, the Assyrian encounter with this unique architectural feature in Israel had begun more than a hundred years earlier. The distinctive style of these capitals, their location in the gates and the entrances to the palaces, their size, esthetics, and quality, attracted the attention of the Assyrian rulers who were known for their adoption of artistic and architectural elements, and for incorporating them in the local Assyrian tradition. The Assyrians adopted the volute capitals for a limited time and scope. They were installed in Sargon's palace, which was constructed in his new city, Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad), as well as in Sennacherib's palace in Nineveh (below). The volute capitals were also placed in a few citadels and other official structures established during that period and were used by the local or Assyrian administration in the vassal kingdoms of Judah, Moab, and Ammon, which surrounded the province of Samaria, probably as a result of Assyrian encouragement, approval, or sponsorship.

Columns and Capitals in Assyrian Architecture

In Assyrian architecture the use of stone columns was alien and unusual in private and administrative structures, as well as in palaces.²⁷ The columns in Mesopotamian architecture were made of wood or bricks, and were less common in the

27. Indeed, there are examples of the use of columns even in earlier times in Mesopotamia, but they seemed to disappear later (Collon 1969: 1–18; Winter 1982: 359; Miglus 1996: 421–22).

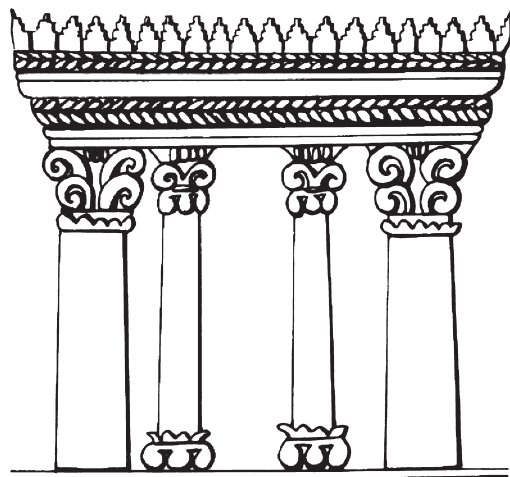


Fig. 6. Illustration based on part of the 8th slab of the left part of Panel WA124939 in Room H of Ashurbanipal's palace at Nineveh.

north than in the south. Most of the non-inscribed stone columns discovered in excavations in Assyria were probably spoils of war or tributes from western kingdoms (see: Luckenbill 1926/1927: 27; Winter 1982: 359; Postgate 1992: 187–90; Miglus 2004: 421–23).²⁸ Even at the height of the Assyrian empire in the 9th to the 7th centuries B.C.E., the column architecture did not become an essential part in the Assyrian style and remained foreign. It was used mainly as a decorative element in parts of structures that had symbolic significance, usually without any function, or, as suggested by Winter (1982: 359), as part of the second story structure in palaces (see summary by Sinopoli 2005: 40, with further literature).

The use of columns penetrated Assyria mainly in the second half of the 8th century B.C.E., parallel to the influence of the plan of the *bīt ḫilāni* structures in Calah, Khorsabad, and Nineveh (Winter 1982: 358; Fritz 1983: 43–58; Miglus 1996: 308; 2004: 423–25).²⁹ It was, however, limited to a few architectural elements, maybe because of the lack of resources (Miglus 2004: 425–26). Side by side with a limited adoption of such elements as the columns in the entrance and in the entrance hall of Assyrian structures, there is a clear continuation of the old Assyrian traditions. The emphasis in Assyrian architecture, and its uniqueness, is in bronze and also stone column bases, while there is hardly any use of monoliths, and even less use of capitals. Miglus' suggestion, to interpret the use of stone columns as a symbolic element, symbolizing the occupation of the west, is acceptable (Miglus 2004: 428).³⁰

28. The relief kept at the British Museum (BM 124938), whose origin is in room H in the northern palace at Nineveh, depicts a row of columns resting on lions' heads and crowned with volute capitals. See Weidhaas 1939: 132, Fig. 2, and cf. p. 142; Sinopoli 2005: 40–41, with a better drawing of this relief, in Fig. 6.

29. The influence of the *bīt ḫilāni* structures did not entail a complete adoption of its components, and only the main elements—notably the way of organizing the different rooms in the structures—were widely adopted (Winter 1982: 360–61).

30. The use of columns reached the private architecture in Assyria only during the 7th century B.C.E., and they can be interpreted as a status symbol (Miglus 2004: 428).

With this background, the stone relief found at Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad), which was built precisely in the period between the destruction of the Israelite cities where the volute capitals were a prominent characteristic, and the appearance of the capitals at Ramat Rahel (and perhaps also at Moab and Ammon), stands out. In this relief, located in Room 7 of the northwestern palace, in the 12th slab of the hunting scene, there is a depiction of a square structure on a high podium, with an entrance decorated with two columns. The columns stand on circular bases, are round and smooth, and at the top of each one there is a decoration of three standing rings crowned with a volute capital. Above the upper frame at the top of the capital is another block of stone. Its narrower part lies on the capital and its wider part supports a lintel, which in turn supports the roof of the structure, which is decorated with crenellations. A stream flows at the foot of this structure, which is situated on the edge of a royal garden and above it is a large wooded hill, topped by another structure that looks like an altar (on this relief see Albenda 1986: 79, Pl. 89; Weidhaas 1939: 142; Winter 1982: 362; Sinopoli 2005: 41, Pl. 10–12, Fig. 8).

Another relief of interest for our study (Slab 8, on the left part of Panel WA124939) comes from Room H of Ashurbanipal's palace at Nineveh (Rassam 1897: 355; see also Winter 1982: 362–63; Dalley 1994: 50–56; Reade 1998: 86; Sinopoli 2005: 39). A large forest and a garden are depicted on a hill. An aqueduct draws water near the garden and channels course water from it throughout the garden. On top of the hill stands a structure and beside it a royal stele and an altar, situated on the slope. The structure is supported by four columns and looks like an attempt to represent three dimensions by showing two front columns and two back ones. All four columns are round and smooth, and the back ones rest on decorated bases. The columns are crowned with volute capitals which support the roof beams, which are decorated with crenellations. On top of the two back columns rests an additional block of stone, its narrower part on the capitals and its wider part supporting a lintel.

The extraordinary appearance of stone columns crowned with volute capitals³¹ permits the assumption that they are part of an Israelite architectural influence in Assyria, and may indicate a local imitation, spoils of war, tributes, or the incorporation of Israelite architects in Assyrian construction projects.³² In any case, this phenomenon has no parallel in Assyrian architecture, so it seems that it was limited in scope and time.

Significantly, in both cases in which the volute capitals appear in Assyrian reliefs they are shown in the context of a royal garden located near Assyrian palaces. Furthermore, it is logical to assume that when the edifice was erected at Ramat Rahel as an administrative and economic center in Judah under Assyrian rule (this may also be the reason for constructing the Khirbet el-Mudeibi^c fortress and possibly also the

31. Additional crowned columns appear in Relief 4 of Room XXII, dating to the days of Sennacherib, probably depicting the palace. See Russell 1991: 151, Fig. 76; Dalley 1994: 51–52.

32. Though it is doubtful if it is possible to connect the appearance of the capitals to the presence of individuals from Samaria and Megiddo in the construction of Dur-Sharrukin's city wall; see Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990: 206, number 291, line 16 and rev. line 1; Fales and Postgate 1995: 19–20, number 19, rev. line 3.

Amman citadel),³³ it was done under Assyrian architectural influence; up until then these vassal kingdoms (as well as afterwards) did not have these elements in their architectural repertoire.³⁴ These fortresses, which do not represent local building traditions, neither in quality nor in characteristics nor in the overall layout, were probably in use by the local administration under imperial rule, and perhaps even housed small forces which were positioned in strategically important locations.

The architecture of these structures is a one-time mixture of local and foreign, old and new characteristics. This mixture has no precedent in the local architecture and it may be seen as an additional characteristic of this unique and fundamental period of time in the history of Palestine, at the beginning of the *Pax Assyriaca* in the ancient Near East.

Summary

In this article I presented the 27 volute capitals discovered in five of the major cities within the boundaries of the Kingdom of Israel as one of the main original architectural features that evolved in ancient Israel during the time of the Omride dynasty. This was a unique architectural phenomenon, with no known parallels from that time (9th century B.C.E.) in the entire region. The distinct style of these capitals, their location in gates and entrances to palaces, their size, esthetics, and quality attracted the attention of the Assyrian rulers when they conquered the Kingdom of Israel (732–722/720 B.C.E.), and they were highly regarded by them. The Assyrians, renowned for their ability to embrace artistic and architectural elements and incorporate them into the local Assyrian tradition, adopted the volute capitals for a limited period of time and scope. They were placed in Sargon's palace, constructed in his new city Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad), as well as in Sennacherib's palace in Nineveh. Volute capitals were also placed in a few citadels and other official structures established during that period, serving the local or Assyrian administration in the vassal kingdoms of Judah, Moab, and Ammon, probably as a result of Assyrian encouragement, approval, or sponsorship. In my opinion this is the explanation for the unusual appearance of these capitals in two exceptional—and in many aspects not well understood—sites in relation to their function, unique architecture, and finds: Ramat Raḥel in Judah and Khirbet el-Mudeibi' in Moab.

33. This assumption was already suggested by Na'aman 2001, who discusses the Assyrian policy and the other examples of such Assyrian administrative centers.

34. Assyrian influences can be seen in a few other elements in the local art, and they were well defined by Stern (2001: 34–36).

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Comparative Aspects of the Aramean Siege System at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath

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Introduction

The esteemed honoree, Prof. David Ussishkin, in addition to his seminal contributions to the archaeology and history of the Bronze and Iron Age Levant, has had the unique opportunity to excavate at four sites in the Land of Israel that have provided important evidence regarding ancient military sieges.

Clearly, the best-known Iron Age site in Israel at which there are remains of a siege—Lachish—was expertly directed, analyzed, and most importantly, extensively published by him (Ussishkin 2004a). These excavations have produced an unparalleled volume of evidence relating to the Assyrian siege and conquest of Lachish in 701 B.C.E., discussed both by himself (e.g., Ussishkin 1977; 1980; 1982; 1990; 2003; 2004b; 2006) as well as by other scholars (e.g., Eph'al 1984; 1996; Gottlieb 2004; Sass and Ussishkin 2004).

In addition to Lachish, David has excavated at three other sites with evidence—archaeological or textual—of ancient sieges: (1) Betar, the last stronghold of the Bar-Kochba rebellion, which fell due to a prolonged Roman siege (evidence of which is seen in the vicinity of the site; Ussishkin 1993 [and there previous literature on the Roman siege works]; 2008); (2) Masada with its impressive remains of the well-known Roman siege (Richmond 1962; Yadin 1966; see now Arubas and Goldfus 2008), at which David participated as a team member in the Yadin excavations; (3) and finally Megiddo, which was besieged by Thutmose III (e.g., Cline 2000: 21; Redford 2003: 31–32), at which David serves as co-director (e.g., Finkelstein, Ussishkin and Halpern 2000; 2006).¹

In light of these impressive siege-related activities of the honoree, we would like to present a brief discussion of a siege system that has been discovered in the excavations at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath (e.g., Ackerman 2004; 2005a; 2005b; Maeir 2003; 2004; 2008a; 2008b; Maeir et al. 2006; Gur-Arieh 2008), with particular emphasis on comparison to the evidence from the sites mentioned above. Due to the fact that in recent years three relatively comprehensive studies of ancient sieges have appeared (Eph'al 1996; 2009; Kern 1999; Campbell 2006), we wish to concentrate on a specific set of relevant topics.

1. This siege is known only textually. The excavators of Megiddo have not found any physical evidence of this siege (Israel Finkelstein, personal communication), although see Redford 2003: 32 n. 88 for a possible hint of this.

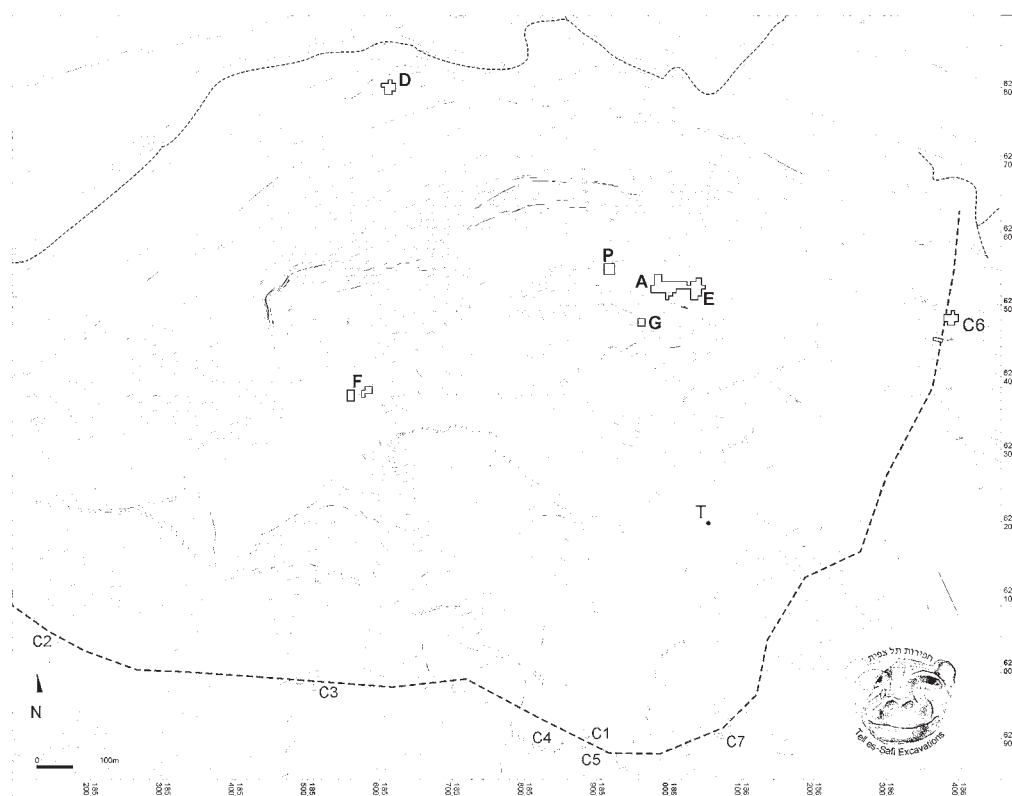


Fig. 1. General plan of Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath and its surroundings, with the location of the siege system and various elements.

Archaeological Evidence of Early Sieges

As can be seen from Eph'al's (1996; 2009), Kern's (1999), and Campbell's (2006) surveys, starting from the 3rd millennium onwards, one can follow a long series of textual and artistic evidence for sieges, both from Egypt and Mesopotamia and from other parts of the Eastern Mediterranean. Up until now, the earliest archaeological evidence on the ground, from excavations, that can be related directly to a siege has been Lachish in 701 B.C.E. (Ussishkin 2004b), followed by evidence of the Persian siege and conquest of Alt-Paphos in Cyprus (e.g., Maier and Karageorghis 1984: 186–203).² This is then followed by a relatively large volume of archaeological data from the Classical world (conveniently surveyed in Kern 1999; Campbell 2006; Davies 2006). The earliest evidence can now be pushed back by approximately a century, with the new finds from Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath.

Conclusive archaeological evidence for a late Iron IIA dating has been found in the siege system surrounding the site of Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath, paralleled with the total

2. While much evidence of the destruction of sites, very likely following a siege, can be noted from sites from throughout the ancient Near East, there are relatively few sites at which actual remains of siege are reported.



Fig. 2. Aerial view of the siege trench and berm on the eastern side of the siege system, looking south. Area C6 can be seen at the bottom of the photograph.

destruction of the site at the same period. This has been quite clearly connected with a historical scenario for this event—the conquest of Gath by Hazael of Aram Damascus, as mentioned in 2 Kings 12:18 (e.g., Maeir 2004; 2008b).³ While, as of yet, the points at which the Arameans conquered the city are not known (as, for example, at Lachish, Alt-Paphos, and Masada), the impressive siege system, which includes a siege trench, a berm, towers, and apparently other elements (see below), provides excellent evidence for one of the methods of siege practiced in the ancient Near East.⁴

3. Various suggestions, based on the analysis of relevant historical sources, have been proposed for the date of this campaign, most falling within the last two decades of the 9th century B.C.E. (e.g., Mazar 1954: 230; Hallo 1960: 42; Ehrlich 1996: 73; Lipiński 2000: 387), or the very beginning of the 8th century B.C.E. (797 B.C.E.; Rainey and Notley 2006: 215). One should note that both Cogan and Tadmor (1988: 141, n. 4) and Eph'al and Naveh (1989: 199, n. 36), have questioned the validity of reconstructing the date of this campaign based solely on the rather limited textual references. A slightly earlier dating is suggested, *inter alia*, by the radiometric dates of short-lived samples from the relevant destruction level at Tell eṣ-Šāfi/Gath (Stratum A3), which indicate a date within the 3rd quarter of the 9th century B.C.E. for this event (see Sharon et al. 2007: 44). A more detailed discussion on the historical reasoning for an early date of this event is currently in preparation, preliminarily presented in Maeir 2009.

4. All the available evidence indicates that the various elements which will be discussed below should be identified as a siege system. While various alternative suggestions have been raised (in

Prolonged Siege

When dealing with the Iron Age, scholars most often think of the Assyrian army and its expert ability to conquer cities. As demonstrated in the past, due to geo-strategic considerations, the Assyrian army preferred to storm and conquer cities quickly, and their army was trained accordingly (Eph'al 1983). Nevertheless, one should not forget the existence of long, drawn out sieges in early periods. While such a siege can be carried out by simply surrounding the targeted settlement with a sufficient number of troops, the construction of a physical barricade makes this much simpler. While there is clear evidence for such systems in the Classical periods, such as Alexander the Great at Tyre (e.g., Kern 1999: 209–17) and the Roman army at Alesia in Gaul (Harmand 1967; Barral, Reddé, and Schnurbein 2001; Campbell 2006: 148–57), Masada (Richmond 1962; Arubas and Goldfus 2008) and Betar (Ussishkin 1993), most of the evidence from the pre-Hellenistic ancient Near East of such prolonged sieges derives solely from the written sources (see, e.g., Eph'al 1996: 40–65 for a discussion of various texts mentioning prolonged sieges).

The finds from Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath can now provide the first archaeological evidence for a prolonged siege from the ancient Near East, one that fits in well with the textual evidence. While we cannot determine the actual length of time of the Aramean siege at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath, it is clear that it lasted for an extended period of time. The extensive logistical efforts required to construct the siege system around the site, including a monumental siege trench over 2.5 km long, would have required the work of thousands of people for several months. Based on a very rough estimate, just for the siege trench itself, more than 70,000 m³ of stone⁵ would have had to be quarried, not to mention the need to move the quarried material to alternate locations (whether incorporated in the nearby berm, or used for construction of various siege related features, such as towers). In addition to the actual workers carrying out the quarrying of the trench, the manpower involved in this endeavor would have had to include a substantial force of combatants whose job would be to

oral communications, by various scholars—none, to the best of our knowledge, published), they do not correspond with the evidence on the ground.

These suggestions include: (1) That it is a defensive feature; this cannot be accepted due to its distance from the city defenses, its location on a forward slope, and that the berm is placed on the side farther from the city in relationship to the trench. (2) That it is a siege system related to the Crusader period; this cannot be accepted due to the clear stratigraphic dating of the various elements. (3) That it is an enclosure wall related to the Ottoman period village of Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi; this cannot be accepted because: (a) of the early dating of the various components of the system; (b) no parallels to anything similar exist in any other Ottoman period village. (4) That it is a water channel; this cannot be accepted since the bottom of the trench follows the topography of the surrounding hills, and from a gravitational point of view, water would not be able to flow throughout. (5) That this is a quarry; this cannot be accepted since: (a) similar, narrow, yet elongated (over 2 km long!) quarries are unknown; (b) the majority of the stone that was quarried from the trench is a soft chalk, hardly suited for building.

In summary, while these various alternative suggestions cannot be accepted, the tactical logic in the placement of the various elements and the parallels discussed below support the identification of this feature as being part of a siege system.

5. This rough calculation is based on the assumed dimensions of the trench, ca. 2.5 km long, ca. 5 m deep, and ca. 8 m wide at its top and ca. 4 m wide at its base, and on a very rough assessment that one laborer could quarry and move ca. 1 m³ of stone per day.

insure the blockade before the physical encirclement was completed, and if needed, to defend the working teams from threats from both the besieged city and from possible external forces, and a large scale logistical force (in charge of, e.g., supplying food, tool production and upkeep, medical services, etc.). This means that quite an extended period was required to carry out this project, probably on the order of several months.⁶

Additional evidence to this effect can be seen in the geoarchaeological evidence from the vicinity of the siege system. The siege and its ramifications seem to have had adverse effects on the environment, apparently manifested in massive denudation of the vegetation around the site (see, e.g., Ackerman et al. 2004; 2005a; 2005b; Maeir et al. 2006). Although the length of time that these activities took is hard to determine, one can assume that it would have taken more than just a brief period to strip bare the surroundings of the site so dramatically. Interestingly, the archaeological evidence at Tell eš-Šāfi/Gath of this ecological devastation relating to the siege fits in well with biblical and extra-biblical descriptions of just such events during the siege and conquest of cities (see now, Maeir et al. 2006; Hasel 2005; Wright 2008).

Siege Trenches

As part of the blockade of a besieged city, the use of various methods of encirclement is well documented. The best known of these methods is the construction of a siege wall, a circumvallation (Hebrew *dayeq* [דַּיִיק]), such as the examples from Masada and Betar,⁷ and, in written sources, the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. (2 Kings 25:1; Ezek 4:2), and various Greek and Roman sieges (e.g., Kern 1999: *passim*).

Less known is the use of a siege trench as part of siege system, as seen at Tell eš-Šāfi/Gath. Although there is textual evidence for the early use of siege trenches at both Middle Bronze Age Mari (Dossin 1950: 162–63 [letter 90: 19–20]) and as part of Thutmosis's siege of Megiddo (e.g., Lichtheim 1976: 33)⁸ in the early 15th century B.C.E., there is very little additional textual or archaeological evidence for siege systems that include a siege trench before the pre-Modern period. To the best of our knowledge, the only other siege trench in pre-Modern contexts that is known from the Levant, save for the two Iron Age examples that will be discussed below (by Hazael at Gath and by Bir-Hadad, son of Hazael, at Hadrach) is an apparent siege trench, and double wall, that was put up by John Hyrcanus during his year-

6. Eph'al suggested an estimate of the length of time that it took the Assyrians to build the siege ramp at Lachish as between 23 (with 1000 laborers; Eph'al 1984: 63–64) to 35 days (with 500 laborers; Eph'al 1996: 79–80, n. 152) of work. But note Ussishkin's (2004b: 742) justifiable cautionary remarks on these calculations.

7. See Uehlinger 2003: 298 for a possible representation of an Iron Age II siege wall (surrounding Jerusalem or Ashkelon?) in Sennacherib's reliefs. Ussishkin (2004a: 697) notes that with all likelihood, such a wall was built by the Assyrians around Lachish in conjunction with the 701 B.C.E. siege, but no remains of this could be found in the vicinity of the site.

8. It should be noted that Redford (2003: 31–33) has some reservations on whether or not there was a siege trench at Megiddo.



Fig. 3. Close-up view of the trench after excavation.

long siege of Samaria in 108/107 B.C.E.⁹ It is only following the appearance of gun powder based gunnery, and its use as a major tactical factor in the siege, conquest, and defense of cities, that there is extensive evidence for the use of siege trenches by besieging forces. These trenches served first and foremost to protect the besieging forces from the cannon bombardment rained upon them by the defenders of the besieged city, and less as an actual physical barrier to blockade the city.¹⁰

9. Josephus, in *AJ* XIII: 276, mentions that Hyrcanus built a ditch (τάφρου) and a double wall around Samaria, whilst in *JW* 1: 64 he only mentions a wall as part of this blockade. We would like to thank Amit Dagan, staff member of the Tell eṣ-Şāfi/Gath Archaeological Project, for pointing out this reference. In addition, it should be noted that Josephus claims that during the siege of Jerusalem by Antiochus Sidetes (against Hyrcanus) “he cut a double ditch, deep and broad” (*AJ* XIII: 239). Bar-Kochva (1966) claims that such a feature was unnecessary in the case of Jerusalem since it is surrounded from three sides with deep ravines and that the ditch Josephus is referring to was excavated later by the Hasmoneans.

10. For a brief discussion of late Medieval/early Modern siege techniques, see, e.g., Parker 1995: 106–17; for a discussion of the revolution in siege warfare, and fortifications, brought about by the introduction of cannonry, see, e.g., Keegan 1993: 320–26; DeVries 1999; for a Napoleonic era siege trench in Israel, see Berman 1997.

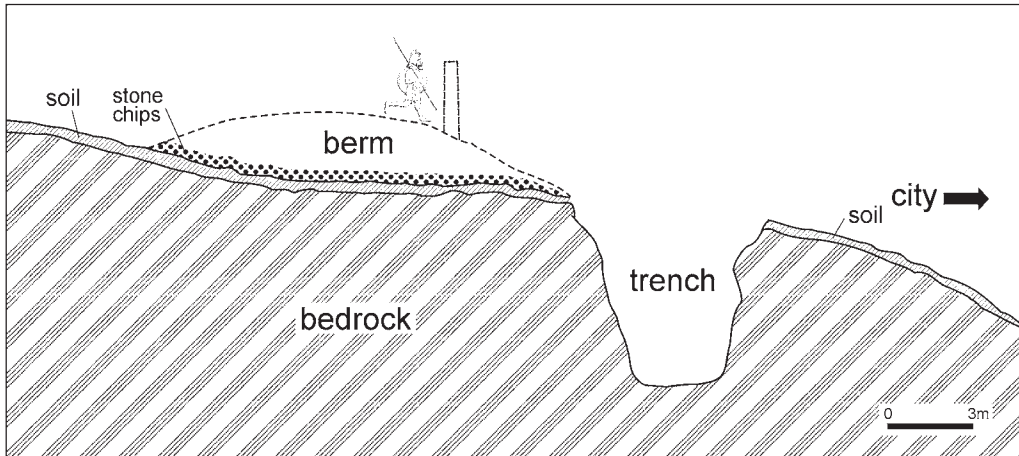


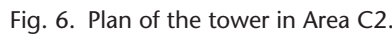
Fig. 4. Cross-section with suggested reconstruction of the trench and related features; view from north to the vicinity of Area C6.

On the other hand, in the few cases in which early siege trenches are known, it would appear that they served first and foremost as a physical barrier around the city. This barrier was meant to enclose the besieged inhabitants, preventing them from escaping and from receiving supplies, and at the same time, making it difficult for the besieged combatants to attack the besieging army. This latter point is an aspect of no small significance, as the besieging force is very much exposed to attack, most often lacking a sufficiently protective defensive perimeter (see, e.g., Eph'al 1996: 98–99).¹¹

This function can be seen clearly in the siege system at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath, where the location of the trench is far beyond the range of all projectile weaponry available during the Iron Age (the trench is located several hundred meters beyond the lines of the city's fortifications; on the effective reach of early long-range projectiles [arrows and slingshots], see, e.g., McLeod 1965; 1972; Korfmann 1972: 40–42; 1973; Eph'al 1984: 62; Crosby 2000: 72–78; Gottlieb 2004: 1953; Burke 2008: 32–37).¹² Clearly then, the trench was not built primarily to protect the besiegers from projectiles as in the Modern period siege trenches. On the other hand, the location of the trench at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath is in almost all cases on a forward slope in relationship to the mound, with the related berm, and the associated defensive

11. An interesting solution for a perimeter defense for a besieging army has been recently suggested. During the 3rd century C.E. Roman siege of the city of Cremna in Pisidia, Turkey, a second, external siege wall was found ca. 180–280 m away from the inner siege wall. According to Davis (2000: 152–53) the second, outer wall functioned as defensive line for the besieging troops against an attack from their rear.

12. The exceptional report of a composite bow used by the Ottoman Sultan Selim III (ca. 1798 C.E.) that fired an arrow to a range of 889 m (!), if to be believed, is not to be seen as representing the normal range of such weapons in antiquity. See, e.g., Bergman and McEwen 1997: 154; Crosby 2000: 77.



14. It should be stressed that during the Iron Age IIA, up until the destruction of Gath by Hazael (e.g., Maeir 2004) a large lower city existed on the northern side of the site, between the Valley of Elah riverbed and the mound of Tell eṣ-Šāfi/Gath itself. This was already clearly discerned in the survey of the site (Uziel and Maeir 2005: 62), where it was suggested that the site reached a size of ca. 45–50 ha. Although this assessment, which was based on clear data from survey *and* excavations, was questioned by some (e.g., Shavit 2003: 77, n. 14; 2008: 143, n. 11), these doubts can safely be laid to rest in light of the results of the excavations in Area D, in the lower city, in the 2007 and 2008 seasons, in which extensive evidence for the late Iron Age IIA lower city was

This was clearly demonstrated through remote sensing (using Ground Penetrating Radar). Analysis of sub-surface elements to the north of Area C6, indicated that both the trench and the berm continue northwards into the Valley of Elah, towards the riverbed, beyond the location of the visible remains of the trench and the berm that can be seen on the surface around Area C6.¹⁵

Despite the impressive nature of the siege trench at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath, and its capabilities in creating a blockade around a city, the very rare use of this type of siege tactic does require attention. In fact, aside from the mention of this type of feature at MB Mari, LB Megiddo, and Hellenistic Samaria (and possibly, Jerusalem; see above), the only other example that is known relates to a siege conducted by Bir-Hadad, the son of Hazael, at the city of Hadrach in northern Syria, just a few years after the conquest of Gath by Hazael (see Maeir 2008b).

If this method was used successfully in various instances in the ancient Near East, the question arises why there are so few examples on the ground. It would appear that the answer is quite simple. Despite the impressive nature of this feature, it is extremely costly and labor-intensive, requiring many man hours of work, and impressive technical and logistical capabilities, to carry out such an operation under combat conditions. On the other hand, other methods of circumvallation, and in particular the construction of relatively simple walls, whether built of stone or wood, would require a much less sustained and demanding effort on the part of the besieging army. For example, in the 5th century B.C.E. sieges of Nisaea, Delium, and Pylos, it took the Athenian army mere days to construct circumvallation walls around each of these respective cities (see, e.g., Kern 1999: 204).¹⁶ Such speed would not be possible if one planned to dig a trench around the city, not to mention that one should take into account that many armies of the ancient Near East, particularly the smaller polities of the southern Levant, did not have the logistic and technological capabilities necessary to carry out such a complicated endeavor.

To this one can add that once the Assyrian army introduced the innovative methods of conquering fortified positions, as so aptly discussed by David Ussishkin in relationship to Lachish (e.g., 2004b), it could very well be that other armies in the ancient Near East chose to use similar tactics of siege and conquest when dealing with fortified cities.

Components of the Siege System

Evidently, carrying out such a prolonged and complex siege around a major city would require sophisticated logistical and technological abilities. In addition, it is clear that if such a siege system was to fulfill its function, and in particular over an extended period of time, it would need to be comprised of a wide array of features,

discovered, including remains of the widespread destruction of the site, as seen in other excavation areas as well.

15. For a full report on this, see Pincus 2005; Pincus Ben-Avraham forthcoming. Preliminarily, see <http://www.mnemotrix.com/geo/essafi/trench/intro04.html>.

16. It should be noted that much more protracted efforts in the building of a siege wall are known as well, such as the Spartan circumvallation wall around Plataea (479 B.C.E.), which took some two-and-a-half months to build (Kern 1999: 115).

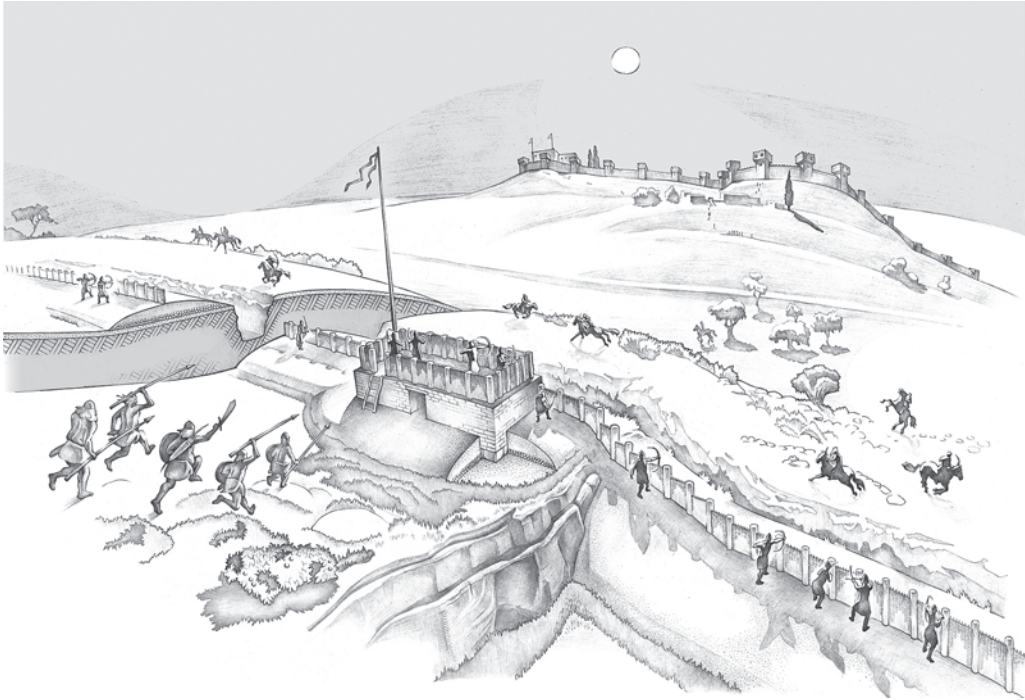


Fig. 7. Artist's rendering of the siege system, including the trench, berm, and tower in Area C6, with view towards besieged city (looking from east to west). Illustration by Alexander Pichura.

each serving different functions. Thus, in addition to the physical blockade created by the trench, we have already seen that the siege system at Tell eṣ-Šāfi/Gath included an impressive berm that was laid parallel to the trench, on the side of the trench away from the city. Likewise, along this berm, at least three small, stone built towers were discovered, most likely serving as strong points (see Figs. 5–6 for the plans of two of these towers; for a preliminary isometric reconstruction of the siege system in the vicinity of the tower in Area C6, see Fig. 7).

One can assume that other features existed as well. It would be very logical to assume that along the berm, the Arameans constructed some sort of palisade, made most likely of relatively accessible and perishable materials such as wood, branches, and thistles, perhaps similar to that which is described in relation to Thutmose III's siege of Megiddo (see Redford 2003: 32). In addition, it most likely would have included camps and other locations at which logistic functions of various types were carried out, not to mention the command and control of the besieging forces. For such a siege, one can envision the need of supply camps and depots, technical supplies and infrastructure (for example, ongoing supply of tools and their repair for the excavation of the trench). Similar features are well-known from other sites, such as Masada and Betar, where camps of various sizes served for a wide range of functions (for Masada see Arubas and Goldfus 2008). Likewise, one should mention the attempt to locate the Assyrian camp at Lachish (e.g., Ussishkin 1980; 1982:

118–126; 2004b: 695–697, 740–741; cf. Jacoby 1991; Uehlinger 2002), which would indicate a feature of both a logistic and command-related nature.

Needless to say, all these features would leave some archaeological imprint on the surroundings. In addition to the trench, berm, and towers that have been discovered at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath, telltale, but as yet insufficiently studied evidence in the vicinity of the site, particularly on the hill tops surrounding it, indicate the possible presence of stone enclosures, perhaps camps related to the siege system.

Summary

It would appear then that the recently discovered siege system at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath can add important new information about siege in the ancient Near East, particularly if one connects it with what was previously known from other historical and archaeological sources.

First and foremost, the system at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath pushes back, by at least a century, the earliest archaeological evidence for a siege system. Second, it provides us with archaeological evidence of the prolonged nature of such sieges, both regarding the time needed to prepare such a siege, and the ecological devastation seen in the vicinity of the site. Third, the siege system at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath provides excellent evidence for the use of a rather rare method of siege—the construction of a siege trench around the site—a technique rarely seen in other pre-Modern contexts. And finally, the complex nature of such a siege system, and the multiple components which must have been part of such an effort, are at least partially illustrated at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath.

It is most likely that the siege system at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath, evidence of the siege and conquest of Gath of the Philistines by Hazael of Aram Damascus in the second half of the 9th century B.C.E., along with the similar tactics used soon after in the conquest of Hadrach by Bir-Hadad the son of Hazael, can be seen as a largely unique Aramean method of siege that was used for a short period during the Iron Age. This method was soon supplanted by more sophisticated approaches to besieging and conquering cities, so aptly exemplified by the exploits of the Assyrian military might. These latter techniques apparently required less effort for the construction of the encircling barrier around a besieged city, and were thus preferred. It is only later, in the early Modern period, with the changes in battle tactics resulting from the emergence of gun powder-based cannonry that the siege trench once again figures as an important element in siege warfare.

* * * * *

Addendum

In a somewhat ironic twist of fate, after this study was submitted to press, David Ussishkin himself published an article in the *Israel Exploration Journal* (Ussishkin 2009), in which he questioned the interpretation of the trench at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi/Gath as being related to siege in general and to the Aramean siege of Gath in particular.

Needless to say, we are honored to have our research and its conclusions so closely followed by the honoree, as David has done in this new paper. But alas, following a close reading of his arguments, we believe we can state that his conclusions are not supported by the available evidence (including, *inter alia*, material appearing in the present article). While an extensive reply to his article will appear in another forum, in this addendum we would like to list some central points that demonstrate the problematic aspects of his suggestion (the page numbers in parentheses relate to the page numbers in Ussishkin 2009).

1. Contrary to what Ussishkin writes (pp. 140–142), and as stated in n. 14 above (p. 235) in the present study, recent work at Tell eṣ-Šāfi/Gath has proven that the site was ca. 400–500 dunam (40–50 ha) in size during the Iron Age II. This is not only based on the surface survey but is now strongly supported by the results of the excavations in the lower city (Area D), where extensive remains of the late 9th century B.C.E. destruction have been found, indicating the extent of the lower city as suggested by the survey results.

2. David (on p. 143) apparently did not understand the significance of the Ground Penetrating Radar studies that were conducted on portions of the trench (see Pincus 2005; Pincus Ben-Avraham forthcoming). These studies demonstrated that the trench continues into the Elah River valley, beyond the sections that are seen on the hills surrounding the site, indicating that in fact the trench did connect to the Elah riverbed on the northern side of the tell and originally did fully surround the site (by utilizing the natural topography of the riverbed, which was probably augmented by additional constructions).

3. David appears to have missed several studies describing our work on the siege system (see, for example, the relevant items in the list of references of the present article), including Shira Gur-Arieh's M.A. thesis, which appeared in 2008. This latter study deals specifically and extensively with the trench and related finds (including architecture and pottery from the various areas in the trench that were excavated and analyzed).

4. Ussishkin (p. 150) believes that our comparison of this feature (as a siege trench) to the “ḥrṣ” mentioned in the Zakur inscription cannot be accepted. Instead, he believes that Eph'al's (2009) interpretation of the “ḥrṣ” as a tunnel is to be preferred (albeit without explaining the reasoning for this preference). This despite the fact that it has been demonstrated (Maeir 2008a) quite conclusively that there is no linguistic basis for understanding “ḥrṣ” as a tunnel—it can only be a trench/channel.

5. David questions the existence of quarrying marks in the trench (p. 144) and debates the suggested dating, character, contents, and process of formation of the fill in the trench (p. 145). These finds and interpretations are based though on detailed archaeological, geomorphological and geological studies that were conducted on these features. If he does not accept the methods used, the finds discovered, and the suggested interpretations, he must detail his alternative interpretations beyond statements such as “appears to the naked eye to be natural” (p. 144).

6. David believes that the “berm” (the pile of earth and stones that were taken out of the trench) is not visible along the entire trench (pp. 145–46, Fig. 8). He is mistaken regarding this point, and the picture that he published to demonstrate this issue (his Fig. 8), claiming that the berm does not exist along a certain section of the trench, is misunderstood by him; in fact, the berm can be seen along the entire length of the trench, always on the far side from the tell. Apparently, David was unaware of the at-times telltale evidence of the berm, just as this major feature (and other parts of the siege system) was missed in earlier surveys (by Dagan and Shavit).

7. Due to the fact that, in his opinion, the berm is not to be found along the entire trench (but see above, point 6), David (p. 145) questions its suggested relationship to the trench and our belief that it served as part of the siege system (an additional defensive line). Although there is a wall marked in the schematic section that we have published on several occasions (his Fig. 7), this is only a tentative suggestion. On the other hand, the discovery and excavation of two towers that are related to the berm (and an additional possible tower; see Figs. 5–6 in this paper), in our opinion, clearly demonstrates the relationship of the berm to the trench and the military function of the two.

8. David (p. 147) interprets the layers that were discerned in the berm as simply “typical surface debris.” The close archaeological, geoarchaeological, micromorphological, and other studies that were conducted on these strata in the berm indicate otherwise, and one cannot simply dismiss them offhand without an adequate alternative explanation.

9. David also asks the question (pp. 147–48) that, if the trench was excavated and large amounts of stone were removed, where has all this stone gone? Not only are there extensive remains of quarrying chips in the berm (despite what he states on p. 148), in many areas surrounding the tell there is extensive evidence of large quarried blocks of stone, most likely related to the trench.

10. Contrary to what David states (p. 145), the trench was not excavated at only one location. While an extensive excavation was conducted in Area C6, full sections of the trench were dug with mechanical equipment at several other locations, and additional portions were partially excavated. In all these locations, the picture of the shape of the trench and the history of its refilling (first refilling in Iron Age II, second in Byzantine period) appears to be consistent. Due to the clear, explicit, and undeniable evidence for the date of the laying of the berm (Iron Age IIA) and gradual, erosion-related refilling of the trench (the lower half filled up in the Iron Age IIA, and, following a long hiatus, apparently due to climatic conditions, the rest refilled in the Byzantine period), there can only have been a very brief period of time (the late Iron Age IIA) in which this feature could have been created (and thus, limiting the possible interpretations of the feature, dovetailing perfectly with our suggested historical scenario).

11. Ussishkin lists various historical references to siege trenches in antiquity (pp. 149–53), but has missed several important examples. As mentioned in the article above (pp. 251–52), there is mention of a siege trench in the Mari texts, and in addition, Josephus informs us that siege trenches were used in several Hellenistic-

period sieges in the time of the Maccabbees. In addition, while David does mention the Egyptian siege trench at Megiddo by Thutmose III (pp. 149–50), he prefers an outdated translation of the relevant term (as a “girdle wall”) as opposed to the now-accepted interpretation as a “trench.” Thus, his argument that siege trenches do not appear before the Roman period (pp. 152–53) does not appear to be factually based.

12. And finally, his suggestion that it perhaps is a natural feature (p. 154) runs contrary to the opinions of all the geologists and geomorphologists that have seen this feature over the last 15 years or so. Unless he can provide a valid explanation as to how this can be understood as a natural feature, this cannot be accepted.

All told, these and other points (which will be detailed in a forthcoming study) make it impossible to accept David’s critique of our suggested interpretation of the trench at Tell eṣ-Šāfi/Gath and, in fact, further demonstrate the validity of our proposal.

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Egyptian-Type Pottery at Late Bronze Age Megiddo

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Introduction

For many centuries, the city-state of Megiddo was under the direct sphere of influence of the pharaonic kingdom in the Nile Valley. The site's importance and Egypt's interest in controlling it resulted from its favorable strategic location on one of antiquity's main international highways, which connected Egypt with the empires in the north. The peak of interaction between Megiddo and Egypt took place during the New Kingdom period. It was at Megiddo that Pharaoh Thutmose III defeated a confederation of rebel Canaanite cities (1457 B.C.E.) and secured Egyptian hegemony over the entire country. Egypt maintained hegemony over the southern Levant until the second half of the 12th century B.C.E. During the Eighteenth Dynasty, Egyptian interests were sustained primarily by diplomatic connections and the mere hint of movement—and occasional intervention—of the Egyptian army. During the Nineteenth Dynasty and early- to mid-Twentieth Dynasty, Egypt fastened its grip on the southern Levant and established a network of garrisons with physical presence at strategic locations in the country (Weinstein 1981).

Late Bronze Age Megiddo is repeatedly referred to in Egyptian texts (see Kempinski 1989: 11–13 for a summary). Not surprisingly, evidence for Egypt-related material culture can also be found at the site. Among the most prominent finds are an ivory model pen case of the high official Thutmose, showing an offering scene with the royal cartouches of Ramesses III (Wilson 1939), and a bronze pedestal of a statue, inscribed with the cartouches of Ramesses VI (Breasted 1948). Other Aegyptiaca include additional ivory pieces, stone vessels, scarabs, and, last but not least, pottery forms, which are the topic of the present paper.

Egyptian-type pottery appears in two groups, as actual imports from Egypt and, much more commonly, as “local” imitations of Egyptian forms, the latter most commonly referred to as Egyptian-style vessels (Martin 2004; 2005).¹ Pottery that can be related to the Egyptian ceramic tradition comes from the Oriental Institute excavations (hereafter: OIE) on the mound (Loud 1948) and in the cemetery on the eastern slope (Guy and Engberg 1938), as well as from the ongoing Tel Aviv University excavations (Megiddo Expedition) in Areas F (Ilan, Hallote, and Cline 2000; Gadot, Yasur-Landau, and Ilan 2006), G (Finkelstein and Zimhoni 2000), and K (first presented in this article). For the location of the various areas, see Fig. 1.

1. “Local” stands for a production at Megiddo or any other south Levantine site.

In what follows, vessels of Egyptian form are discussed type by type in three main sections: (1) Eighteenth Dynasty types; (2) Nineteenth and early- to mid-Twentieth Dynasty types; and (3) additional types of a rather loose or ambiguous affinity to the Egyptian pottery tradition. A division between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties suggests itself not only for historical reasons but is also based on the fact that the Egyptian ceramic corpus in the southern Levant underwent marked changes between these periods (Martin 2005: 329–41). Many characteristic Eighteenth Dynasty types went out of use and a good number of new types were introduced at the dawn of the Ramesside period. The transition to the next ceramic phase, that of the Twentieth Dynasty, was much smoother, and a clear continuation in the Egyptian ceramic tradition can be attested until the end of Egypt's hegemony over Canaan at ca. 1130 B.C.E. Hence, Egyptian-type vessels of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties were treated together.

The Eighteenth Dynasty

Carinated Jar

This type describes rather small, handleless, necked jars with a relatively angular carination at the maximum body diameter, and often with a squat, broad body profile (see mainly Holthoer 1977: 133–45, Pls. 30–32 and Bourriau 1981: 25–41). Holthoer (1977) classified this type into several subgroups. Only his Class CV1, “broadnecked carinated vessels,” is of relevance here. Carinated jars in general appear with round, slightly convex, flat, disc, or ring base. In Egypt, they are typically produced in marl fabrics, mainly “Marl A” of the Vienna system, a fabric that presumably originated in Upper Egypt (Nordström and Bourriau 1993: 176). Frequently, they bear a thick, creamy slip in varying tones (from white to yellowish and pink) and a decoration in red, brown, or black. Moreover, they are often burnished. The decoration most commonly consists of vertical line bundles, at times paired with a criss-cross or wavy line pattern, and generally combined with one or more horizontal lines at the base of the neck. In some cases, the decoration consists of horizontal bands only, which may appear on the upper body and neck (e.g., Holthoer 1977: Pl. 32: IIIR/3D/a–d). The rim tops may be painted with hatches.

In Egypt, carinated jars are common in the Second Intermediate Period and Eighteenth Dynasty. Broadnecked carinated vessels (Holthoer's CV1) appear only from the late Second Intermediate Period and are most common in the early- to mid-Eighteenth Dynasty (Holthoer 1977: 133–34; Bourriau 1981: 29–30; Holthoer, Säve-Söderbergh, and Troy 1991: 25, 30, 39; Williams 1992: 41–42). At their most popular in the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, they become less prevalent thereafter and by the late Eighteenth Dynasty have disappeared. A good example of their distribution is the cemetery of Fadrus in Nubia, where they are most common in local Phases IIa (Hatshepsut–Thutmose III) and IIb (Thutmose III, sole reign), still appear in considerable numbers in Phase IIc (Amenophis II–Thutmose IV), are almost absent in Phase IIIa (Amenophis III) and have completely disappeared in Phase IIIb (late Eighteenth Dynasty) (Holthoer, Säve-Söderbergh, and Troy 1991: 30; Säve-Söderbergh and Troy 1991: 225–44).

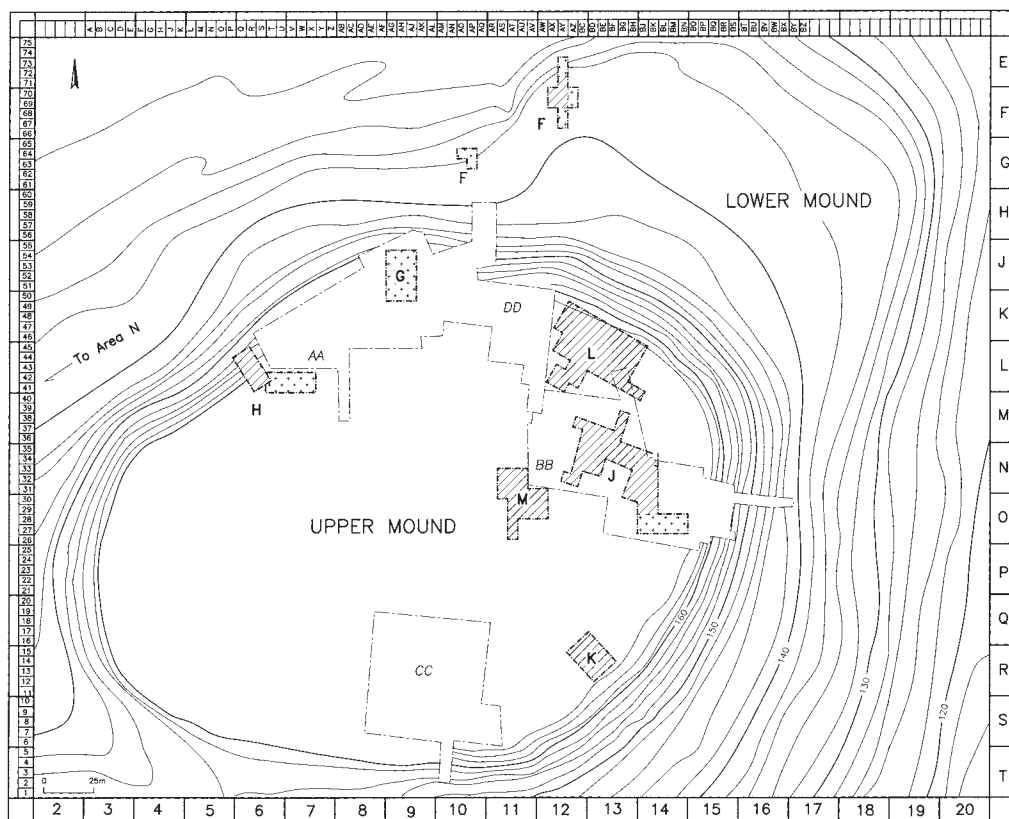


Fig. 1. Megiddo: Site map with excavated areas (Finkelstein, Ussishkin, and Halpern 2006: Fig. 1:1)

In the southern Levant carinated jars occur mainly in LB I contexts, at sites such as Tell el-ʿAjjul, Yoqneʿam, and Beth Shean (for references see Martin and Ben-Dov 2007: 198–99). Two examples of the broadnecked type come from Megiddo—one from the cemetery on the eastern slope and one from Area F.

Figure 2:1 (Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 41:17=140:11)

Eastern cemetery, Tomb 38B

Vessel description. An example with squat body and well-accentuated carination slightly below mid-point; the vessel has an everted shelf rim and stands on a ring base. It bears a yellowish slip and is painted brown. Horizontal burnishing was observed. Although the actual vessel was not analyzed, it can be assumed that it is of Egyptian origin. The decoration consists of a set of vertical line bundles on the body, hanging down from a single horizontal line at the base of the neck. At least one of the bundles shows a ladder motif between two lines. The rim top is decorated with hatches. This jar best fits into the early- to mid-Eighteenth Dynasty, when the vertical line decoration is most common (Holthoer 1977: 134, Pls. 30–32; Martin and Ben-Dov 2007: 198). The ring base, although occurring earlier, becomes

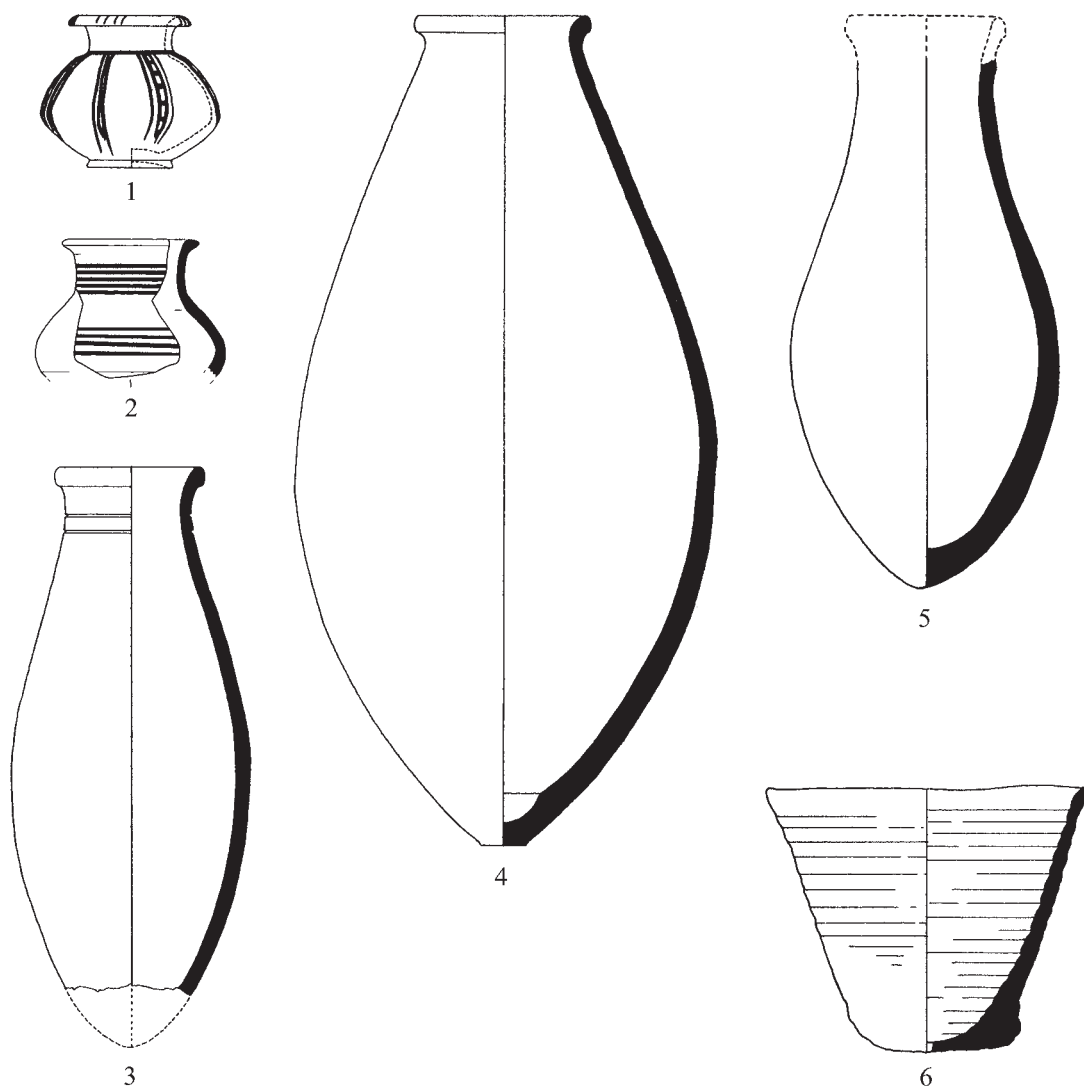


Fig. 2. Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty types (Scale 1:5).

common only from the reign of Hatshepsut (Bourriau 1981: 29–30 and note 49). The moderately tall neck and moderately wide mouth are more typical of the first half of the Eighteenth Dynasty than later. Hence, all in all a date no later—and probably no earlier—than the reigns of Hatshepsut or Thutmose III is proposed.

Context. The vessel under review comes from Chamber B of Tomb 38, a natural cave with one large and a side chamber (B) (Guy and Engberg 1938: 82). Pitting activities and remains of two kilns attest to non-funerary activity at some point. The pottery, though mostly disturbed, belongs mainly to an earlier part of the Late Bronze Age. While Kempinski associated this group with the reign of Thutmose III

(1989: 70, n. 73), Gonen assumed a date in the 14th century (1992: 41). Three pieces of evidence support Kempinski's date (or at least an earliest occupation in this time): a cooking-pot (Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 40:19) that best fits in the LB I (cf. Panitz-Cohen 2006: 67–68, Type CP2); the carinated jar discussed above; and the arguably “local” (i.e., non-Cypriot) imitation (Amiran 1969: 182) of a White Painted VI teapot (Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 41:16), if one regards the chronological distribution of its imported counterpart as general guideline (mainly MB IIC–LB A with a continuation in the LB IB; courtesy of C. Bergoffen).

Figure 2:2 (Gadot, Yasur-Landau, and Ilan 2006: Fig. 12.4:5)

Area F, Stratum F-10a

Vessel description. This fragmentary jar is characterized by a soft carination at mid-body, a rather tall, straight neck with an everted shelf rim, and a wide mouth in relation to the maximum body width. It is white-slipped and decorated with black-to-brown horizontal bands, five on the neck and four just above mid-body. Additionally, the rim is painted with black hatches (not indicated in the drawing). The fabric is light red with abundant small white grits and mica, and can readily be identified with Egyptian Marl A (see above). Jars decorated with horizontal bands on neck and body are late renditions in the lifetime of this type, not being common before the sole reign of Thutmose III and continuing into the reigns of Amenophis II, Thutmose IV, and Amenophis III (Holthoer 1977: 134, Pls. 30–32). A relatively wide mouth and tall, straight neck are also features that belong to the later life-span of this jar type (Bourriau 1981: 29–30). In summary, morphological features and decoration style suggest a somewhat later time frame than for the previously discussed specimen. A time slot between the (sole) reigns of Thutmose III and Thutmose IV, i.e., the LB IB, is most likely.

Context. The jar under review originates from a well-stratified domestic context of Level F-10a in Area F (98/F/67). While Gadot, Yasur-Landau, and Ilan proposed an LB IA date for this level (2006: 188), based on the carinated jar, a date in the LB IB is suggested instead. In this regard, I maintain that none of the Chocolate-on-White and Cypriot Bichrome Wheelmade Wares presented by Gadot, Yasur-Landau, and Ilan can be securely associated with this stratum. A Chocolate-on-White carinated bowl (2006: 174, Fig. 12.4:12) of Fischer's “CW I” style (1999: 11, Table 2) was presented in Level F-10a but, according to the locus index (Blockman and Finkelstein 2006: 439), actually belongs to a F-10b context.² Also, Fischer's “CW I” arguably predates even the LB IA. Two additional Chocolate-on-White sherds come from safe F-10a contexts (Gadot, Yasur-Landau, and Ilan 2006: Fig. 12.4:13–14); however, both are small and may be residual. The same holds true for the rim of a Bichrome krater (2006: Fig. 12.3:3). Two additional Bichrome body sherds could only be attributed to a general F-10 horizon (2006: Fig. 12.4:15–16). Moreover, sherds of a White slip I bowl from Level F-10b (2006: Fig. 12.1:5) provide a *terminus post quem* (LB IA) for the next level, F-10a. In short, a LB IA date does not seem to stand its ground. Apart from the Egyptian-type jar, a date in the LB IB or even later is also

2. The vessel originates from Locus 98/F/95, which was sealed by Pavement 98/F/85 of F-10a and attributed to F-10b in the locus index.

supported by a radiocarbon study, which places the boundary between Levels F-10b and F-10a to as late as around 1400 B.C.E. (Boaretto 2006: 551–52).

Slender Ovoid Jar

These handleless jars are characterized by a slender ovoid body, rounded base, and everted, generally externally thickened rim (for a discussion and comparanda see Martin 2005: Type JR11). In Egypt, they are typically made of Nile silt and belong to the Second Intermediate Period and Eighteenth Dynasty, after which they disappeared. In the southern Levant they occur in the first half of the Late Bronze Age (LB I–IIA), and, like Egypt, cease with the end of the 14th century B.C.E. Apart from six examples from Megiddo, vessels of this type can be cited from Tell el-ʿAjjul (e.g., Petrie 1931: Pl. XLII:31H2, 31H7, 31H8), Tel Seraʿ XII–XI (Martin 2005: 124; Pls. 37:14, 38:8), Lachish Fosse Temple I (Tufnell, Inge, and Harding 1940: Pl. LIVB:335), Tel Aphek X-14 (Martin 2005: 123, Pl. 23:2), Tel Mor XI (Martin and Barako 2007: Fig. 4.10:1), and Beth Shean (Mullins 2007: Type JR5). All the examples that I analyzed were not of Egyptian origin but local, south Levantine imitations. This probably also holds true for the examples from Megiddo.

Figure 2:3–4 (Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 57:9–10)

*Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 154:6 (photo only); Eastern Cemetery, Tomb 26*³

Vessel description. The most interesting trait of the vessel in Fig. 2:3 are the (two) incised horizontal grooves on the neck. This decorative element does not seem to appear prior to the reign of Amenophis II (Aston 2006: 72). Fig. 2:4 shows a large variant of the type under review. The body is less slender and the base flattened, the latter an unusual feature on this type of jar. Egyptian examples of this larger variant come from sites such as Malqata (Hope 1989: 22, Fig. 2i) and Fadrus in Nubia (Holthoer 1977: Pls. 16: IR/0/l–m[185/478:1], Type ST1; 36:IR/0/i–k[185/253:4], Type JO 1). A vessel with very similar body contour but slightly smaller proportions comes from Tell el-Amarna (Peet and Woolley 1923: Pl. L:xxv/247).

Many decades ago, Guy and Engberg noted that comparanda of this type from Tell el-Amarna were frequently decorated in blue, red, and black (1938: 155). Hence, their reaction to the fact that none of the Megiddo specimens showed traces of decoration is understandable (1938: 155): “but this is hardly conclusive evidence as to their original state, since the vessels found in Egypt were colored with paint of a consistency which would quickly disappear under the climatic conditions of Palestine.” This reasoning was adopted by Gonen (1992: 50): “The four [actually five] Egyptian date-shaped jars, all from cave 26, are perhaps of the el-Amarna type, although the painted decoration was erased.” Obviously, such a view cannot be sustained. Almost none of the south Levantine examples of this type bear any traces of decoration (for an exception from Tell el-ʿAjjul see Petrie 1934: Pl. XLVIII:31K19) and also in Egypt itself undecorated examples are frequent. On the other hand, a

3. The plate description of Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 57:9 mentions two additional examples of this type (field nos. x 25 and x 65), which were not drawn. Hence, the number of slender ovoid jars in Tomb 26 amounts to five.

sufficient number of decorated Egyptian vessels are known in the southern Levant to negate this statement (e.g., see the carinated jars treated above).

Context. Tomb 26 was a multi-chambered cave with many alcoves set deep inside the rock (Guy and Engberg 1938: 103). Unfortunately, it had been disturbed and the roof had collapsed. The finds in the tomb belong to the Late Bronze Age but, according to the excavators, not to a single phase. Gonen, however, ascribed this tomb to the LB IIA (1992: 41). Except for the example in Fig. 2:3, which post-dates the reign of Thutmose III, the slender ovoid jars may date to any time in the LB I-IIA.

Figure 2:5 (Loud 1948: Pl. 60:7); Area BB, Stratum VIII

Vessel description. The rim is missing; the fabric description—numerous large black and white grits—argues for a non-Egyptian origin.

Context. The jar derives from Locus S=T3000, located in a courtyard house east of the temple in Area BB, and is the only vessel retrieved from this context (Loud 1948: 166), which cannot be regarded as safe.

“Flower Pot”

“Flower pots” describe coarsely executed, deep v-shaped bowls with steep and straight or flaring, ribbed sidewalls and a heavy, flat base. The general shape of these vessels and the fact that their bases were commonly perforated in the center coined their designation (Holthoer 1977: 83–84, Pl. 18). While used as actual flower pots in a garden complex at Tell el-Dabʿa (Hein 1994: 39–40, Fig. 11a; Jánosi 1994: 30–31, Fig. 8), elsewhere their function is less clear. Evidently, a hole in the base eliminates the possibility that they held liquids. Holthoer noted that, if used as containers, their contents would have been restricted to dry, semi-dry, or viscous materials (1977: 83). He further assumed that these vessels were occasionally used as incense burners, as he observed a layer of soot adhering to the interior surface on many exemplars. In addition, based on their similarity to Old Kingdom bread molds, he also proposed that they served as bread molds. He suggested that two vessels were used for the baking process—one with a perforation placed upside-down as cover on an unperforated one (cf. Holthoer 1977: Fig. 61). During baking the hole would have served as a funnel, permitting air to escape.⁴ Petrie offered another, seemingly more likely solution for the function of these vessels. He mentioned a perforated specimen that contained a pressed cake of barley mash and grains (Petrie 1977: 23). He then suggested that vessels of this type “were used to squeeze out the fermented beer from the grain, the cake being sufficiently tenacious not to break through at the hole” (1977: 23).

In New Kingdom Egypt, “flower pots” belong to the Eighteenth Dynasty (Aston 2002: 57) and are typical Nile silt vessels (for comparanda, see Mullins 2007: 459,

4. Holthoer also suggested that vessels that showed no evidence of secondary exposure to heat and hence could not have served as bread molds might have functioned as mere votive symbols for bread. He assigned the same votive function to his “beer bottles,” assuming that together these vessels were representative of Egyptian bread (flower pot) and beer offering (beer bottle) (Holthoer 1977: 86). Note that Holthoer’s reasoning is partly circular (cf. Martin 2008: 252, 254).

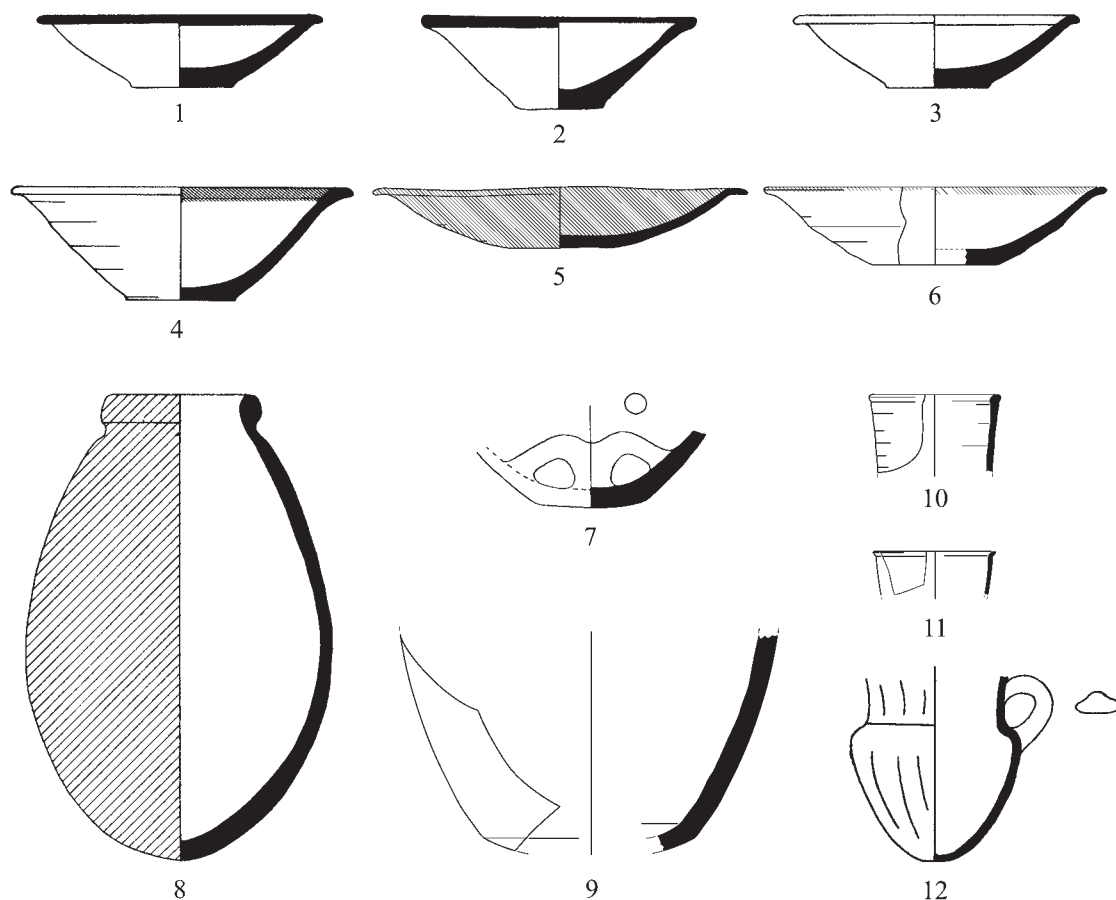


Fig. 3. Ramesside Egyptian types (Scale 1:5).

n. 87). As pointed out by Williams (1992: 34–35), in Nubia, these vessels, which became common during the reign of Hatshepsut, had already become rare in the days of Amenophis III, and disappeared thereafter. Occurrences from the southern Levant come from LB I–IIA contexts at Tell el-‘Ajjul (Petrie 1931: Pl. XXXVII:6E13; Petrie 1932: Pl. XXVII:9Q), Jaffa (Kaplan excavations, courtesy of A. Burke) and Beth Shean Strata R-1b–a (Mullins 2007: Type JR2). The Beth Shean specimens are locally made, which probably also holds true for the other examples. Two specimens come from the eastern cemetery at Megiddo.

*Figure 2:6 (Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 59:7);
Eastern Cemetery, Tomb 26B*

The vessel was found in Chamber B of Tomb 26. It has the characteristic ribbed body, heavy flat base, and perforated bottom; there is no indication of whether the perforation was executed before or after firing. The base is ca. 10 cm wide, which is well in accordance with this type.

*Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 157:13 (photo only);
Eastern Cemetery, Tomb 59A*

This vessel is characterized by a flaring upper part. It was retrieved from a storage(?) pit (A) in a large cave (Guy and Engberg 1938: 106–8), which seemed also to have been used for purposes other than burial throughout the Late Bronze (predominantly) and Iron Ages.

The Nineteenth–Twentieth Dynasties (Ramesside Period)

Bowl with Flaring Rim and Flat Base

A generally rather shallow, medium-sized serving vessel with straight to slightly curved sides, a flat base, and a flaring rim. In Egypt, this is one of the characteristic Ramesside Nile silt types. In the southern Levant, bowls of this type occur in 13th and early- to mid-12th century contexts, and always as local products. They form an integral part of the Egyptian-style assemblages at Beth-Shean, Tell es-Sa'idiyeh, Tel Aphek, Tel Mor, Tel Sera', and Deir el-Balah (Martin 2005: Type BL13; Martin 2006b: Type BL73; Martin and Barako 2007: 135–38). Like their Egyptian counterparts, examples occur undecorated, red-slipped (on the inside, outside, or both), or with a red painted rim. Several bowls of this type come from Megiddo, where they have a rim diameter of 18–25 cm, a height of 4–7.5 cm, and a base width of 5.5–8 cm. The height:width ratio ranges between 1:3 and 1:4 with the exception of Fig. 3:5, which is extremely shallow (1:6), and may hence be defined as a “plate.”

*Figure 3:1–3 (Loud 1948: Pls. 65:19 = 138:9, 65:20, 69:3);
Area AA, Strata VIIIB–A*

Loud 1948: Pl. 65:19–20 (Fig. 3:1–2) are both from Locus 2131, a room in a structure to the west of the Late Bronze Age gate, affiliated with Stratum VIIIB by the excavators and reassigned to VIIA by Finkelstein and Zimhoni (2000: 234). Both vessels are decorated with a red band on their rim. The plate description in Loud 1948: Pl. 65:19 (Fig. 3:1) mentions plant temper in the fabric, low firing, and a string-cut base—all characteristic features of this type in the southern Levant (Martin 2004). The plate description of Pl. 65:20 states an additional, undecorated example, which was not illustrated (field no. b 1042). The latter originates from Room S=3103 in the palace, which was regarded as a safe Stratum VIIIB locus by Finkelstein and Zimhoni (2000: 230). The undecorated example in Fig. 3:3 was attributed to Stratum VIIA (Locus 3158).

*Figure 3:4 (Finkelstein and Zimhoni 2000: Fig. 10.1:2);
Area G, Stratum VIIA or Slightly Later*

A red-rimmed specimen from a floor (92/G/14) in the inner, eastern chamber of the Late Bronze Age gate; the floor belongs to a phase in which the gate had been turned into a kitchen (two ovens) and its entrance blocked (Ussishkin 2000). The question was raised whether the gate went out of use before—perhaps it was blocked as part of the defensive measures taken against the impending enemy attack—or immediately after the destruction of Stratum VIIA. In the first case, the above-referred-to floor would belong to Stratum VIIA, in the second case it would

attest to a phantom squatter phase, “VIC.” In his attempt to prove that Beth Shean Lower VI outlived Megiddo VIIA, Finkelstein raised the option that above-mentioned Ramesses VI pedestal, which traditionally was affiliated with Stratum VIIA,⁵ might have been brought to Megiddo later, possibly during said squatter phase (1996: 171–72).

I maintain that it is unlikely that the bowl under review postdates the destruction of VIIA. The local, south Levantine production of flaring rim bowls seems to have ceased with the end of the Egyptian domination in Canaan. At Megiddo, this clearly happened with the destruction of Stratum VIIA. Hence, affiliated with “VIC” both the Ramesses VI pedestal and the bowl would have to have come from somewhere else, possibly from Beth Shean itself. A visual inspection of the fabric of the bowl opts for a local origin at Megiddo (and clearly not for an origin from Beth Shean; for a Beth Shean specimen see below).

Figure 3:5 (04/K/79/VS1); Area K, Level K-8

This extremely shallow example (“plate”) is characterized by a dark red slip on both the inside and the outside. It originates from a room in a domestic building in Area K. Level K-8 belongs to the 13th century B.C.E., a date supported by the vessel under review. A red slip on Egyptian-style flaring rim bowls in the southern Levant is a hallmark of the LB IIB and does not seem to occur before or after that period (Martin forthcoming).⁶

Figure 3:6 (06/K/93/VS2); Area K, Level K-7

This red-rimmed example comes from Level K-7 in Area K, which can be dated to the transition of the late 13th to the early 12th century. This vessel is of special interest, as its overall appearance, manufacturing traits, and, mainly, fabric betray its Beth Shean origin (cf. Cohen-Weinberger 1998: 409 [“Travertine Family”]; Martin 2009: 438–39 [Fabric Group 70]). An additional vessel fragment of the same type and fabric was found in an unreliable context (not illustrated). Note that, judging from the photo and plate description, the vessel in Fig. 3:1 could also be of this fabric. One may take this as evidence of direct trade relations between Megiddo and Beth Shean, with both sites on the east-west trade route from the Mediterranean coast to the land of Gilead in Jordan.⁷

Spinning Bowl

Fig. 3:7 (Loud 1948: Pl. 70:3) shows the lower part of a “spinning bowl” with two interior loop handles. The fragment was attributed to Stratum VIIA by the excavators but comes from an unreliable context in Area CC (S=1820). Spinning bowls are rather deep, rounded bowls of medium size with loop handles—in most cases

5. The pedestal originates from an unreliable stratigraphic context, buried beneath a Stratum VIIB wall in Area CC.

6. A red-slipped bowl from Stratum VIII (Loud 1948: Pl. 61:11), which was classified as a flaring rim bowl by Killebrew (1998: 143), is not only mistyped (it lacks a pronounced flare and should rather be classified as plain-rimmed form; see below) but is also from an unreliable context and likely to be later.

7. An additional import from Beth Shean is a strainer jug from Level K-6 (fabric identification made by the author), dated to the 12th century (courtesy of E. Arie).

two—attached to their interior bottom. The handles may be joined to provide extra strength, such as on the example under review. The use of these bowls in the spinning or plying process was exhaustively discussed by T. Dothan (1963), Vogelsang-Eastwood (1987–88), and Allen (1997). The discovery of the Megiddo specimen in a domestic area supports the assumption that these bowls were used in household industries.

In Egypt, these vessels are known from at least as early as the Middle Kingdom (Allen 1997: 30–36). In the southern Levant they occur starting from the LB IIA. Their introduction and early distribution are clearly related to Egyptian activity. In the Iron Age this shape, and evidently its related production technique, was adopted in the south Levantine pottery repertoire and textile working traditions. It is continuously attested until the 7th century (T. Dothan 1963: 97–107; Martin 2005: 102–3).

Neckless Jar with Rolled Rim

This type describes neckless storage jars with ovoid to elongated, bag- or sausage-shaped body, round base, and rolled rim. In Egypt, these handleless jars are typically made of Nile silt and were popular from the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty onwards (Aston and Pusch 1999: 42). In the southern Levant, they appear in various Egyptian-influenced assemblages in 13th and early- to mid-12th-century contexts and always as local imitations (Martin 2005: Type JR13). Both in Egypt and in the southern Levant, these jars are frequently red-slipped. The most impressive collection of vessels of this type comes from Beth Shean (Martin 2006b: 148–49; Martin 2009: Type TJ76c).

Figure 3:8 (Loud 1948: Pl. 65:3); Area AA, Stratum VIIB or VIIA

The vessel belongs to an ovoid and rather small (height: 31 cm) variant of this type. Its exterior is covered with a red slip. It comes from Room 2131, which, as discussed above, was alternately attributed to Strata VIIB and VIIA. A good parallel in size and shape comes from Stratum N-4 in Area N at Beth Shean, correlated with Level VII (Panitz-Cohen 2009: Pl. 7:4).

Imported Amphora

Fig. 3:9 (06/K/87/VS4) from Level K-8 in Area K shows the base of an Egyptian imported “amphora,” the Egyptian pendant of the “Canaanite commercial jar” (most recently Aston 2004: 184–200). The fabric can be identified as Marl D of the “Vienna System” (Nordström and Bourriau 1993: 181–82). The exterior of the fragment is covered with a thick cream slip, which is typical for vessels of this type and fabric.

The wide, carinated base is an important chronological marker, as it appears only on amphorae from as early as the reign of Ramesses II and not later than the end of the Nineteenth Dynasty (Aston 2004: 191–93, Fig. 8a; Martin 2006a: 199–200, Fig. 2 variant B1). In addition to those found at Megiddo, Egyptian amphorae were found at Beth Shean, Tell Abu Hawam, Tel Nami, Acco, Tel Aphek, Tel Mor, Tell eṣ-Šāfi, Ashkelon, and Deir el-Balaḥ (for published examples, see Martin 2006a: 199–203). Their distribution primarily at coastal sites indicates their use as shipping

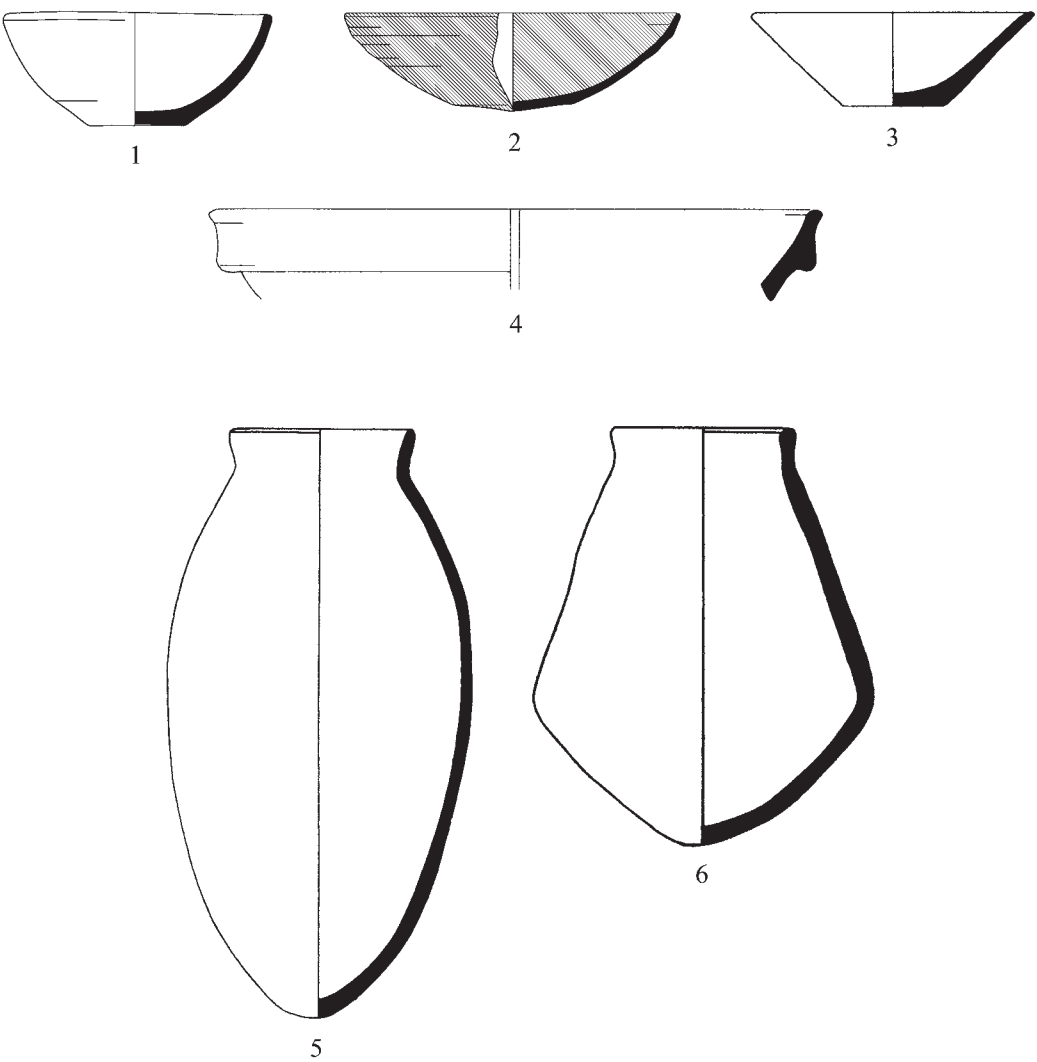


Fig. 4. Types of a more general affinity to the Egyptian pottery tradition (Scale 1:5).

containers, an assumption strengthened by their occasional appearance as far as Cyprus and the Aegean (Martin and Barako 2007: 132). Hence, it is more than likely that the amphora under review reached Megiddo via one of the coastal sites, most probably Tell Abu Hawam.

Imported Handled Cup

Egyptian handled cups are small, necked containers with a handle attached to neck and body, an externally thickened rim, and a round, narrow disc or flat base. In analogy to its first appearance in Egypt, in the southern Levant this type first

occurs in the late Eighteenth Dynasty (Tell el-ʿAjjul). Later comparanda come from the 13th–mid-12th centuries: Beth Shean, Tell es-Saʿidiyeh, Aphek, Tel Seraʿ, and Deir el-Balaḥ (for references and Egyptian parallels, see Martin 2006a: 204–9). As far as I know, all south Levantine examples are Egyptian imports. They are either of Egyptian Marl D (see above) or of Egyptian Nile B (Nordström and Bourriau 1993: 171–73). Note that Nile clay examples do not seem to predate the 12th century (Martin 2009: 451).

*Figure 3:10 (04/K/82/VS5) and Figure 3:11 (04/K/96/VS5);
Area K, Level K-7*

Two rims of this type were retrieved from Level K-7 in Area K (the affiliation of Fig. 3:11 is questionable). Both fragments are of Egyptian Marl D and coated with the tell-tale cream slip. Apart from that, they show traces of vertical burnishing, also a very common trait on vessels of this fabric.

*Figure 3:12 (Loud 1948: Pl. 67:15);
Area CC, Stratum VIIA*

This fragmentary vessel does not originate from a stratigraphically reliable context (N=1835). It is vertically burnished and, according to the plate description, of “fine, reddish fabric with dark core.” While Kempinski noted that this vessel was probably a local imitation (1989: 76), it is much more likely an Egyptian import. The fabric description would suit an Egyptian Nile clay fabric very well. If so, the cup fits in its Twentieth Dynasty context.

Finally, it is noteworthy that all three extant handled cups at Megiddo were found in domestic contexts. This is interesting, as these vessels were probably valued items containing some precious commodity (Martin 2006a: 205–6).⁸

Types with a More General or Ambiguous Egyptian Affinity

The following section treats those types whose Egyptian affiliation is more general or even ambiguous. While the next three bowl types (simple rounded, straight-sided, and large) are clearly reminiscent of forms of the Egyptian pottery tradition, they are so basic in shape that they probably evolved independently in both the local Canaanite and the Egyptian pottery traditions without a necessary relationship (Martin 2005: 76–80; Martin and Ben-Dov 2007: 196). While clearly part of the Egyptian-style assemblage at one site, they were not necessarily influenced by the Egyptian pottery tradition at another.⁹ At Megiddo, it is probably best to regard these local products as expressions of a general Egypto-Levantine cultural koinée. Appearing alone at a site, these vessels are clearly not sufficient to argue for a direct Egyptian influence in form of physical Egyptian presence.

8. A specimen from the tomb of Tutankhamun was marked with a docket indicating that it contained honey (Aston 2007: 18, Fig. 3:2).

9. When classifying a vessel of such type as Egyptian-style, one should not rely on its shape only but on a coalescence of additional factors, such as manufacturing techniques, surface treatment, decoration, fabric characteristics, chronological setting, as well as contextual evidence.

Round-Sided Bowl with Plain Rim and Flat Base

We see a small- to medium-sized simple, open bowl with rounded walls, a plain rim, and a flat base in Fig. 4:1. While they already appeared earlier in the Late Bronze Age, these simple serving vessels are most typical of the 13th and early- to mid-12th centuries. At Megiddo, they first appear in Stratum VIII on the tell (Loud 1948: Pl. 61:1, 10) and become more popular in Strata VIIIB (Loud 1948: Pl. 65:5–6, 10, 18) and VIIA (Loud 1948: Pls. 68:14–16, 69:2). Also in the eastern cemetery they first occur in well-dated LB IIA burials (Guy and Engberg 1938: Pls. 11:7, 16:3–4) and are ubiquitous in the LB IIB (Guy and Engberg 1938: Pls. 13:1–3, 17–19; 19:9–10, 12; 30:1–2; 32:14–17, 19; 34:1–2; 36:1, 3, 5). In Area K, this is the most common bowl type in Levels K-8 and K-7 (LB IIB).

Bowls of this type form the main component of 13th–12th-century Egyptian-style assemblages throughout the country (Martin 2005: Type BL10). As noted above, one should, however, refrain *a priori* from classifying this type as purely Egyptian.

While at Megiddo these bowls are most often undecorated, examples with a red rim (Loud 1948: Pls. 65:6, 68:14) or with a red slip (Figure 4:2; Guy and Engberg 1938: Pls. 12:18, 19:13) occur occasionally. Such decoration is common in New Kingdom Egypt and is one of the most typical traits on Egyptian-style bowls at 13th–12th-century Beth Shean (Martin 2007: 380, Fig. 6). Such decorated examples can probably be regarded as closer to the Egyptian cultural sphere also at Megiddo. Compared to the generic undecorated examples, red-slipped specimens generally have a slightly larger diameter and were more delicately executed. The flattened or convex base is more carefully thinned out (the undecorated examples generally have a comparably thick base). Like the red-slipped flaring rim bowls mentioned above, such bowls are a good chronological indicator for the LB IIB (Martin forthcoming).

Straight-Sided Bowl with Plain Rim and Flat Base

At Megiddo, medium-sized straight-sided bowls with plain rim and flat base (Fig. 4:3; Guy and Engberg 1938: Pl. 59:5) are less popular than their round-sided counterparts. Several examples come from the eastern cemetery, from burials that produced predominantly LB IIA–B material (Guy and Engberg 1938: Pls. 36:2, 37:5, 59:5). This bowl type, too, is well known in Egyptian-style assemblages throughout the country (Martin 2005: Type BL12).

An example with red slip on the interior (Loud 1948: Pl. 61:11) was attributed to Stratum VIII in Area BB on the tell but comes from an unreliable locus (S=2048). The context is not sealed by any Stratum VII (B or A) floors and might therefore easily be later than Stratum VIII.

Large Open Bowl with Ledged Rim

Fig. 4:4 (Ilan, Hallote, and Cline 2000: Fig. 9.10:26) is the rim of a large open bowl with exterior ledge or ridge. The piece comes from Level F-9 in Area F, which was correlated with OIE's Stratum VIII with a slight possibility of Stratum VIIIB (Ilan, Hallote, and Cline 2000: 220). In Egypt, this type is well known in the Eighth

teenth and Nineteenth Dynasties, after which it disappeared (Martin 2005: Type BL21). In the southern Levant, good examples of such bowls come from Lachish Fosse Temple III (Tufnell, Inge, and Harding 1940: Pl. XXXVIII:55–56), Tel Batash (Panitz-Cohen 2006: Type BL55, especially Pl. 17:1 [Stratum IX]), Tel Mor (Martin and Barako 2007: Fig. 4.7), Tel Aphek X-14 (Martin 2005: Pl. 23:1), and Beth Shean (Mullins 2007: Type BL4b–c).

Handleless Jars

Finally, two additional vessels bear mentioning. Fig. 4:5 (Loud 1948: Pl. 65:1) is an elongated, handleless jar with short, slightly flaring neck. It was attributed to Stratum VIIB by the excavators (Locus 2041; Area AA) but should possibly be moved to VIIA instead (Finkelstein and Zimhoni 2000). While there is little doubt that the general shape is Egyptian, good comparanda are scarce both in Rameside Egypt and at Egyptian-influenced sites in the southern Levant. Similar but slightly smaller comparanda come from Eighteenth Dynasty contexts at Tell el-Amarna (Rose 2007: Type SH 8.2[406]) and Fadrus in Nubia (Holthoer 1977: Pl. 33:IR/0/g–h[185/401:2], Type FU 2). Fig. 4:6 (Loud 1948: Pl. 68:11) from Stratum VIIA in Area DD is another handleless jar with bag-shaped body and short, straight neck. Also the general shape of this type seems Egyptian; however, I know of no exact parallels.

Summary

At Late Bronze Age Megiddo, Egyptian-type pottery appears in contexts contemporaneous with the Eighteenth–Twentieth Dynasties. The earliest occurrences do not seem to predate the LB IB, i.e., the second half of the 15th century B.C.E. The vessels under review were found in palatial/administrative (Area AA), public (F-9 in Area F), domestic (mainly Areas CC and K), and funerary (eastern cemetery) contexts alike without any marked bias towards any of them. In cultic contexts (Area BB), however, they appear to be very scarce. In the cemetery on the eastern slope vessels of unequivocal Egyptian affiliation are limited to the Eighteenth Dynasty (for a similar conclusion see already Gonen 1992: 51). In later tombs only simple, plain-rimmed bowls are attested, which do not necessarily imply direct Egyptian influence (see above). On the tell, a reverse situation can be observed. There vessels of Egyptian type are clearly more common in the Ramesside period. This is analogous to Egyptian-type pottery in the southern Levant in general, which strongly increased in popularity with Egypt's more intensified presence during this time (Martin 2004).

It is noteworthy that there is a concentration of as many as six vessels of clear Egyptian affiliation—five slender ovoid jars and one “flower pot,” all most probably local products—in Tomb 26. While Gonen (1992: 41) ascribed this cave to the LB IIA, with its many chambers and alcoves it does not seem to have been in use during a single period only (Guy and Engberg 1938: 103). It is impossible to determine to how many burials the Egyptian-type vessels belonged. From a typological point of view, all but one (see above) fit in any time in the LB I–IIA. In any case

the corpses buried here, possibly (a family of) Canaanite official(s), seemed to have some ties with Egypt.

Some words should be said about the political status of Megiddo in the Rameside period. In a study of Stratum VIIA, Singer (1988–89) argued that at the time of the Twentieth Dynasty, Megiddo served “as a major, perhaps the major Egyptian center in northern Canaan” (p. 108), an assumption that was mainly based on the hoard of ivories from the “treasury” of the VIIA palace (Loud 1939). Among all the evidence, it was mainly the model pen case of the above-mentioned Thutmose—according to his titles a very high official—that led Singer to the conclusion that “the hoard belonged to an Egyptian official stationed at Megiddo, or, more generally speaking, it was in the possession of the Egyptian administration of Canaan. This, of course, would imply that the palace of Megiddo VIIA was no longer the seat of a Canaanite ruler, but the residency of an Egyptian governor” (Singer 1988–89: 105). And further, “if it was the seat of an Egyptian governor . . . it may even have surpassed in importance Beth Shean, the traditional Egyptian center in the north” (p. 108). Singer’s view was challenged by Mazar (2002), who denied that Megiddo was an Egyptian stronghold during the time of Stratum VIIA and confirmed Beth Shean as the main Egyptian base in northern Canaan. His arguments are based on the great differences between these two cities. The Egyptian nature of Beth Shean is so overwhelming that there can be no doubt as to its identification as a garrison town. Egyptian attributes include buildings and architectural elements, monumental stone reliefs and statues, wall paintings, and extensive pottery production. Mazar argued that none of these features showed up at Megiddo VIIA, which was just a reconstruction of the Canaanite town of VIIB on the same general layout.

While it is clear that Megiddo was under stronger Egyptian influence than other Canaanite cities and it is very possible that a high Egyptian official was temporarily or possibly even permanently stationed at the site, I concur with Mazar’s view that Megiddo was in no way a typical Egyptian garrison town. To Mazar’s arguments one may add the diverse sizes of the two sites. While typical Egyptian garrisons in Canaan tended to be small to medium-sized bases (the tell of Beth Shean, for instance, did not cover more than 1.2 ha; Mazar 1997: 67), the mound of Megiddo covers an area of more than 6 ha (Aharoni, Yadin, and Shiloh 1993: 1003). Apart from that, several points bear mentioning with regard to the ceramic evidence. The Egyptian-style pottery collection at Beth Shean in the 13th- to mid-12th centuries is overwhelming, forming 50% and more of the entire assemblage in various excavation areas (Martin 2006b; 2007). Even if one excludes simple, plain-rimmed bowls from this count, Egyptian forms still account for at least 25% of the assemblage. Type variety and production technology led to the conclusion that this pottery was produced by Egyptian potters residing at the site (Martin 2006b; 2007). The situation at Megiddo is entirely different. Vessels of unequivocal Egyptian derivation form only a minimal fraction of the assemblage.¹⁰ Some even reached Megiddo by trade with Beth Shean itself, as exemplified by the flaring rim bowl in Fig. 3: 6. In

10. In 13th-century strata in Area K, for instance, clearly Egyptian forms do not comprise even 1% of the assemblage.

addition, no drastic increase of Egyptian forms can be attested between Strata VII B and VII A, which could reflect the changed political status suggested by Singer.¹¹ No outstanding collection of Egyptian ceramic forms comes from the palace of VII A (or VII B), which could indicate a status as Egyptian residency. If an Egyptian administration building did exist at Megiddo, it has yet to be found.

11. In Area K even a reverse situation was observed, when Egyptian forms occasionally appear in Levels K-8–7 (VII B) but are absent from Level K-6 (VII A).

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Tel Rehov in the Assyrian Period: Squatters, Burials, and a Hebrew Seal

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The Archaeological Evidence

by
Amihai Mazar

The excavations at Tel Rehov have revealed one of the largest Iron Age cities in Israel (Mazar 2007; see publications in www.rehov.org).¹ The city suffered two major blows: the earlier one (at the end of Stratum IV, during the second half of the 9th century B.C.E.) is attributed to a conquest by the Arameans, probably during the wars between Hazael and Israel following the end of the Omride Dynasty. After this violent destruction, the lower city (5 hectares) was abandoned, while the upper city (5 hectares) continued to be settled until it was finally destroyed, most probably during the Assyrian conquest of Northern Israel in 732 B.C.E. In this part of the paper, I will concentrate on the episode of the Assyrian destruction and its aftermath. Most of the finds come from a few burials, and in particular a single burial (8200), which raises interesting questions concerning the identity of the deceased. A unique West-Semitic seal found in this burial is discussed by Shmuel Ahituv in the second part of the paper.

The Assyrian Conquest of Tel Rehov

The 8th century city at Tel Rehov (Stratum III, with several sub-phases) and its destruction were explored in three excavation areas (A, B, and J) on the upper mound (Fig. 1). In Area B, overlooking the abandoned lower city, a 9 m wide offset-inset mudbrick city wall without a stone foundation was constructed. The construction probably took place towards the end of Stratum III, since it cut dwellings dated to that stratum. The fact that the wall was built of mudbricks without stone foundations intimates that it was constructed hastily, perhaps at the time when the Assyrian threat was already looming. The great width of the wall was probably intended to withstand the Assyrian battering rams. However, despite its massive nature, no evidence for this wall was found in Area J, located on the steep southern slope of the mound. It is hard to explain this phenomenon. Was the city wall completely destroyed and eroded on the southern side of the mound, or was

1. The excavations at Tel Rehov have been directed by Amihai Mazar since 1997 on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and have been generously supported by Mr. John Camp of Minnesota, USA. Drawings were prepared by Y. Rodman, photographs by G. Laron, technical help Y. Rotem and N. Panitz-Cohen.

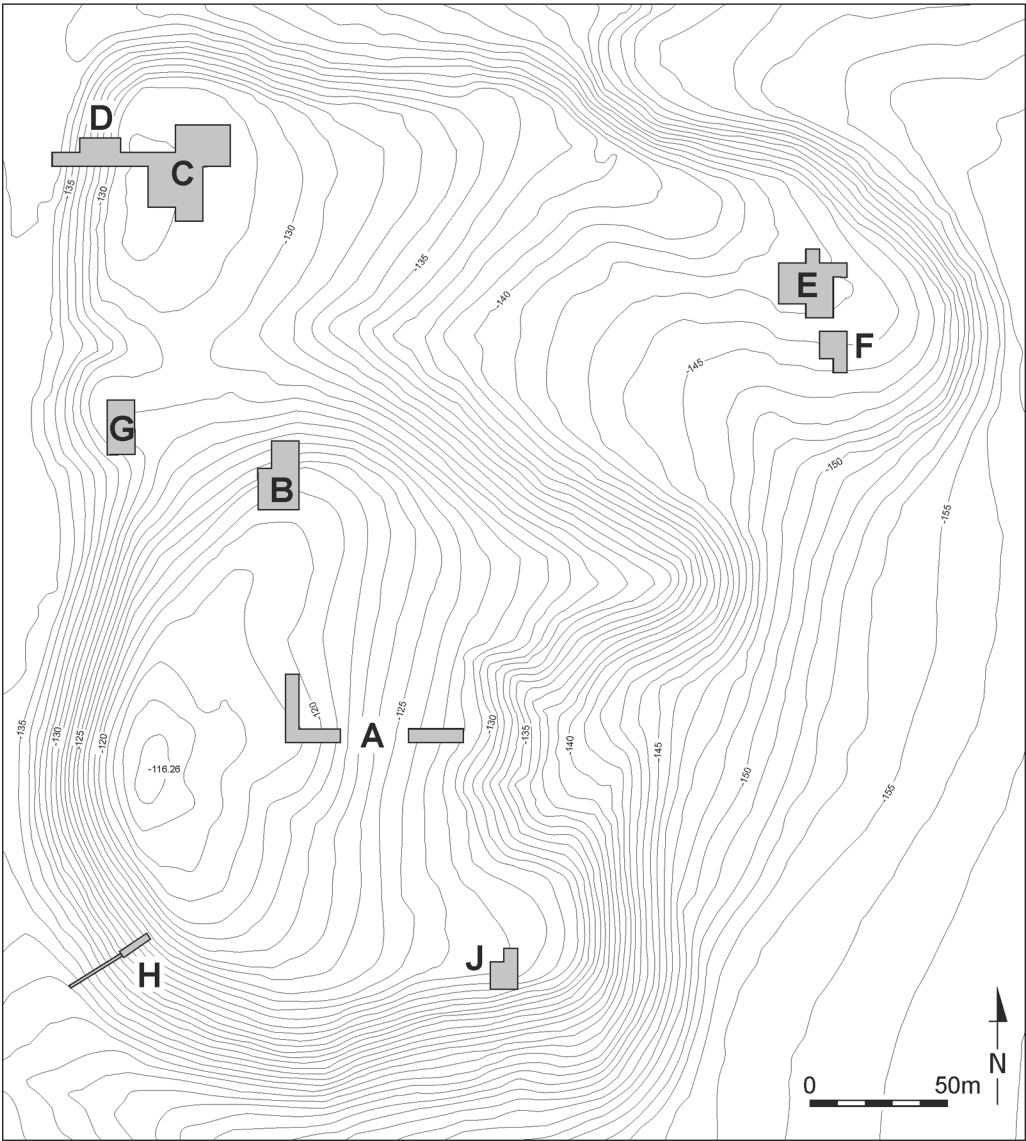


Fig. 1. Tel Rehov, topographic map and excavation areas.

it constructed hastily only in selected vulnerable areas like the moderately sloping northern mound, while other, steeper parts of the mound remained unfortified?

Various parts of Stratum III dwellings were excavated in Areas A, B, and J. All came to an end with the Assyrian conquest, yet there was no evidence of destruction by fire and the finds were rather scarce, with only random complete pottery vessels on the floors. The most telling evidence for the conquest was two human skeletons found among the tumble above the floors of rooms in Area A. One was a

female skeleton found lying decapitated (perhaps intentionally) above a concentration of clay loom weights. The other was a fragmentary skeleton, including a skull, found thrown into the corner of a room (Mazar 1999: 32; Fig. 21). These scenes may be taken as evidence of a massacre that took place in the city following the conquest. Since the corpses remained in the abandoned houses, it is obvious that there was no one capable of recovering and burying them. As far as I know, no similar evidence of a massacre has been found in any of the Iron Age cities conquered by the Assyrians in the Land of Israel, aside, possibly, from Lachish.² It appears that the population either fled or was exiled or massacred, yet the houses did not collapse immediately at the time of the conquest, but rather were abandoned and deteriorated slowly over time.

Squatters

Following the conquest of the city, the city wall in Area B collapsed down to about one meter above the floors of the Stratum III houses. Since a 9 m wide city wall would not simply collapse in such a short time, it seems that the Assyrians deliberately destroyed it. Indeed, a huge accumulation of brick debris originating from this wall was located on the slope north of the wall.

Poor remains of floor surfaces without any other architectural features revealed in Area B above the ruins of the city wall seem to represent short-term squatters' activity following the destruction (Fig. 2). The remains include patches of ashy floor surfaces, concentrations of "doughnut shaped" clay loom weights, and some restorable pottery. Similar evidence of squatters was recovered in Area P at Tel Beth Shean, where poor architectural remains and floor surfaces (Stratum P-6) were found above and east of the ruins of the elaborate Building 28636 (Stratum P-7), which was destroyed by fire most probably during the Assyrian conquest of 732 B.C.E. (Mazar 2006: 238–39).

Burials

Additional evidence of activity at Tel Rehov following the Assyrian conquest can be found in five pit burials of individuals found in Areas A, J, and B. These burials, and particularly one of them, are the focus of the present paper.³

Area A

A single burial (Locus 1135, Square S/2) was found in a shallow pit cut into an accumulation of debris in a courtyard of an 8th century house. The body was found lying on its right side, with the head facing south. Only the lower half of the skull was preserved. The solitary find was an intact Assyrian-shaped bottle found next to the skeleton (Fig. 3:1).

2. In a cave at Lachish, the remains of almost 700 skulls were found, identified by Starkey as a mass burial of people who perhaps were massacred during the war against Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. (Ussishkin 1982: 56–58).

3. The skeletal remains from the burials in Area J and two of the burials in Area B (8200 and 8209) were excavated and studied by Israel Hershkowitz and Taly Kuperman of the Faculty of Medicine, Tel Aviv University. Several details from their unpublished report are included in the present paper.

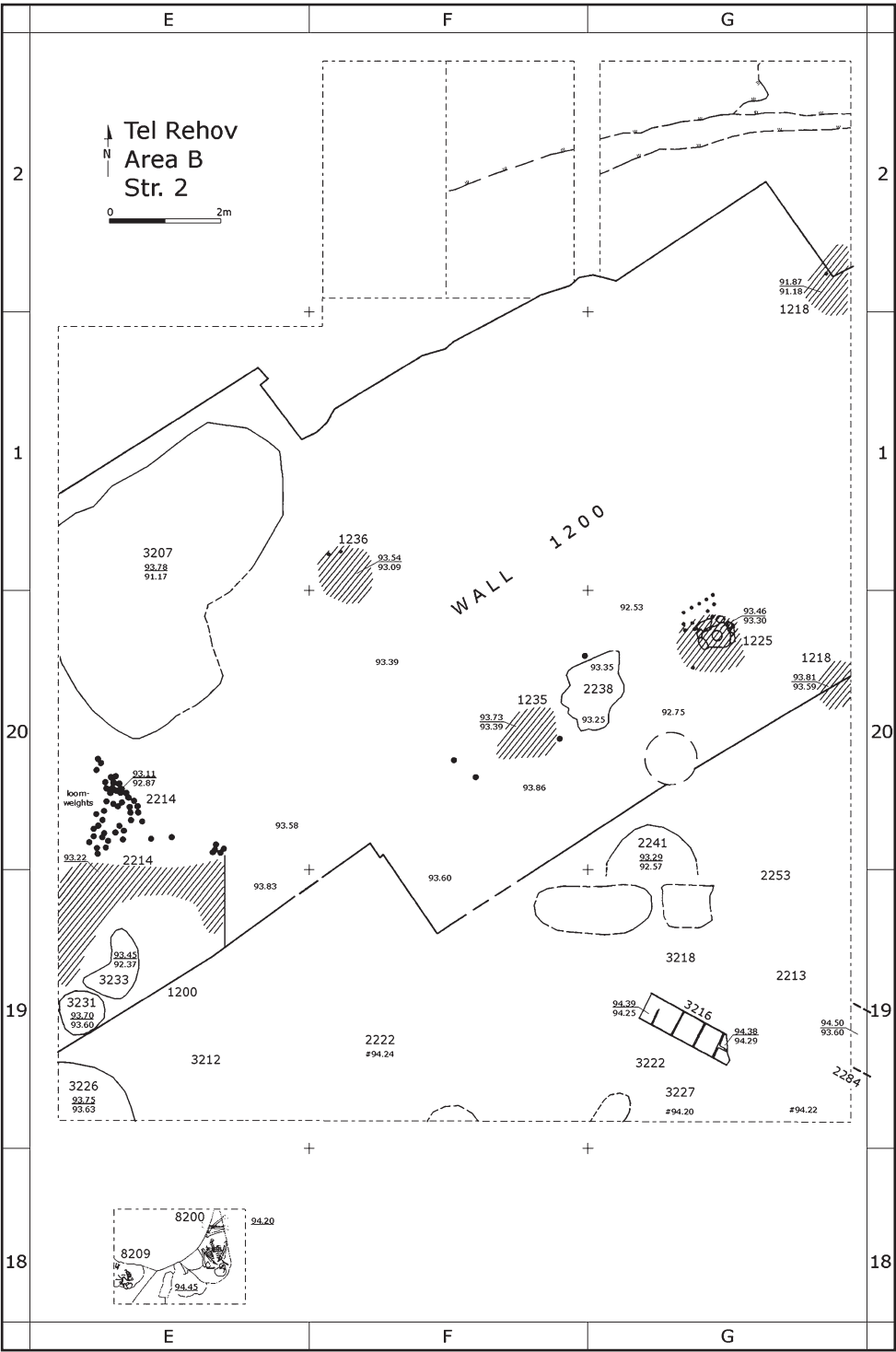


Fig. 2. Tel Rehov, Plan of Area B, Stratum B-2 (general Stratum II), showing contours of the city wall of Stratum B-3 and remains of squatters and burials in Squares E/18–19.

Area J

A single burial (Locus 7089, Square C/5) was found in a pit cut into the mudbrick walls and debris of a ruined room of Stratum J-3 (General Stratum III, 8th century B.C.E.). The pit contained a nearly complete human skeleton of a young male in a contracted position facing north, with the right hand placed below the skull. A standing brick delineated the burial on the south. The only find was a small jug of a local type placed behind the skull. There were three uneven cut-marks on the skull, the result of blows with a sharp tool that might have been the cause of the individual's death.

Area B

Three adjacent burials were found in the southwest corner of this area, above the brick debris and accumulations of the last Iron Age II city (Fig. 2).

Locus 3226 (Square E/19): A pit burial located south of the city wall in the southwestern corner of the square. It contained badly preserved remains of a human skeleton. A single Assyrian-shaped bottle was found near the skull.

Loci 8200 and 8209 (Square E/18): About 5 m south of the burial in Locus 3226, two burials (8200 and 8209) were found close to topsoil, under early Islamic layers. Both are pit burials, the pits having been cut into Iron II mudbrick debris of Stratum III. The northern end of Burial 8200 (the easternmost of the two) was damaged by erosion. This burial pit contained the skeleton of a young male (estimated age 18–20 years), found lying on his back, with his knees bent and his head near the edge of the southern side of the pit. The skull was identified by Israel Hershkowitz as an Armenoid type; thus, the deceased could have originated from northern Syria or Eastern Anatolia. Near the eastern (right) side of the head, a long iron sword was vertically placed. An inscribed West Semitic seal was found on the deceased's chest. Just to the west of the skeleton's legs was a rich concentration of finds: an Assyrian-shaped bottle, a Judahite decanter, an Assyrian-shaped bronze bowl, an iron dagger, an iron ring, an iron bracelet, a fragment of an iron object with a bronze ring attached to its upper part, and a small bronze fibula. About one meter to the west of the head, on a slightly raised level, halfway between the skeleton in Burial 8200 and the one in Burial 8209, there was a concentration of finds, including beads, two miniature Cypriot perfume bottles, and a badly preserved ivory bottle. These finds probably belong to the burial in Locus 8200, though they may be interpreted as gifts bestowed on both burials.

Burial 8209, located about two meters west of the previous burial, contained the remains of a child (3–5 years old) found in a shallow pit which appeared to cut an earlier Iron II brick wall. The body lay in a contracted position facing west, with the hands close to the chest. Near its back was an Assyrian-shaped bottle.

Close parallels to simple pit burials containing a single Assyrian-shaped bottle were found at nearby Tel 'Amal, dug into remains of Strata III and IV of the Iron IIA (Levy and Edelstein 1972: 340–41). Each of the four burials at this site included a single bottle of a type similar to ours (p. 367, Fig. 18:1–4), and one of the burials included a decanter similar to the one from our Burial 8200 (p. 367, Fig. 18:7).

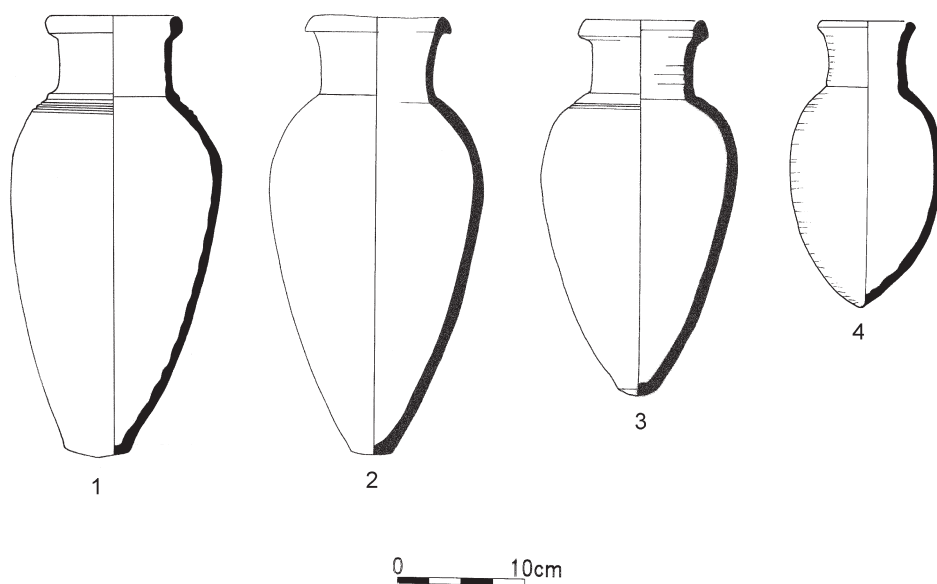


Fig. 3. Assyrian-shaped bottles from Tel Reḥov (No. 1: Area A, Locus 1135; No. 2: Area B, Locus 8209; No. 3: Area B, Locus 8200; No. 4: Area B, Locus 3226).

Notes on the Finds

The following is a short discussion of the more prominent finds in Burial 8200, as well as of the Assyrian-shaped bottles in the other burials.

Assyrian-Shaped Pottery Bottles (Figs. 3–4)

The four intact Assyrian-shaped bottles from the burials (Fig. 3:1–4) belong to a well-known group of elongated bottles with cylindrical necks and pointed or slightly flattened bases. They vary in size (heights range from 22.5–34 cm), details of rim and base shapes, clay color, and workmanship. Two of the bottles from Reḥov have three to four horizontal incisions at the join of the neck and body; two are characterized by much surface calcification, and one has horizontal burnish lines on a light brown slip (similar burnish is found on two of the four bottles from Tel ‘Amal, see below). Petrographic analysis of the four bottles indicated various origins.⁴ The item in Fig. 3:1 was made of Lower Cretaceous clay found in several outcrops along the Jordan Valley; the item in Fig. 3:2 was made of sandy clay and was perhaps produced somewhere along the central Coastal Plain; the production center of the items in Fig. 3:3–4 could not be defined, and they might be imported. Almost 20 bottles of generally similar shape are known from various sites in Israel: Tell Keisan Stratum 5, Yoqne‘am Strata XII–XI, Tel ‘Amal burials (four examples), Tell el-Far‘ah (North), Samaria, Tell en-Naṣbeh, Tell Qasile (7th century), Tel Batash Stratum II, Tel Miqne Stratum 1b (for references and discussion see Briend and

4. Petrographic analysis of the bottle in Fig. 3:1 was carried out by A. Cohen-Weinberger and of Nos. 3:2–4 by D. Ben-Shlomo. Details will be published elsewhere.

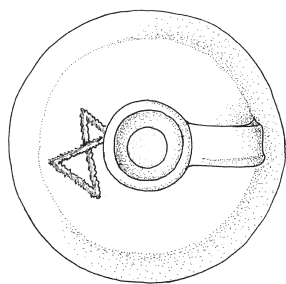


Fig. 4. Assyrian-shaped bottles from Tel Rehov.

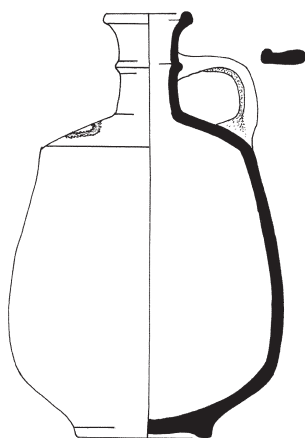
Humbert 1980: 166; Mazar 1985: 110; Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001: 129–30; for the example from Yoqneaʿm, see Ben-Tor et al. 2005: 341–42, Fig. II.48:6). Such bottles, of various sizes and proportion, are known from Neo-Assyrian sites (for examples from burials in Assur, see Haller 1954: Tafel 3: k–y; Hausleiter 1999a: 140, Fig. 9:3, 6, 7; for examples from Nimrud, see Hausleiter 1999b: 47, Fig. 6:64–67; for examples from Tel Aḥmar, see Jamieson 1999: 300, Fig. 2:2–3, 5). Surprisingly, such bottles are lacking in a recent synthesis of Neo-Assyrian pottery assemblages from the Jazira region in northern Syria (Anastasio 2007).

A Judahite Decanter with a Chiseled Mark (Figs. 5–6)

This intact decanter is a typical Judahite vessel: It has orange-colored slip and horizontal wheel burnish, both characteristic features of late Iron II Judahite pottery. Petrographic analysis has shown that it was made of Mozah clay, which is common in the Judean Hills. Thus, the vessel probably arrived from the region of Jerusalem or its surroundings. Judahite parallels are numerous (e.g., Aharoni 1973, Fig. 44:18 and Pl. 47:25; 49:1–2; 50:3, 5, 15–16, from Lachish Levels III and II; Stern 2007: 122; Pl. 7:6, 10, 14, from En Gedi Stratum V). In northern Israel, such a decanter shape is very rare. One example was found in the tombs at Tel ʿAmal, which also contained Assyrian-shaped bottles, as noted above (Levy and Edelstein 1972: 367, Fig. 18:7). Another example comes from Tell Keisan Stratum 5 (Briend and Humbert 1980: Pl. 37:1). Both these examples recall Judahite decanters, and differ from decanters typical of sites in Northern Israel before the Assyrian conquest (Amiran 1969: Pl. 88: 2–4).



cm



0 10cm

Fig. 5. Judean decanter from Burial 8200 and its chiseled mark.



cm

Fig. 6. Judean decanter (photo).

A double triangle (“hourglass” or “butterfly”) motif was chiseled into the vessel’s shoulder after firing with a typical chiseling technique, known in many examples from Jerusalem. A similar motif made in an identical technique was found on the base of a bowl from Jerusalem (Nadelman 1989: 133, 99, Pl. 19:18; 141, Photo 191). A similar “hourglass” motif was incised on the shoulders of three storage jars with pointed bases from Lachish Level III or II, Tel Beer Sheba Stratum II and Tel Sera’ Stratum V (late 7th century). The latter signs were incised before firing and thus—in contrast to our example and the Jerusalem bowl—should be interpreted as potter’s marks.⁵

5. Yadin (1974: 33–34; 1976: 5–6) suggested using these jars as a chronological indicator for a 7th century context, yet the late 8th-century date of Beer-sheba Stratum II seems to be well established, and thus the combined evidence from Tel Beer-sheba and Tel Sera’ probably indicates a continuity in the appearance of this type of jar and mark throughout the late 8th and 7th centuries B.C.E. (note that the stratigraphic attribution of the example from Lachish is uncertain). The sign on the jar from Tel Sera’ differs in that the space between two of the triangles of the “hourglass”

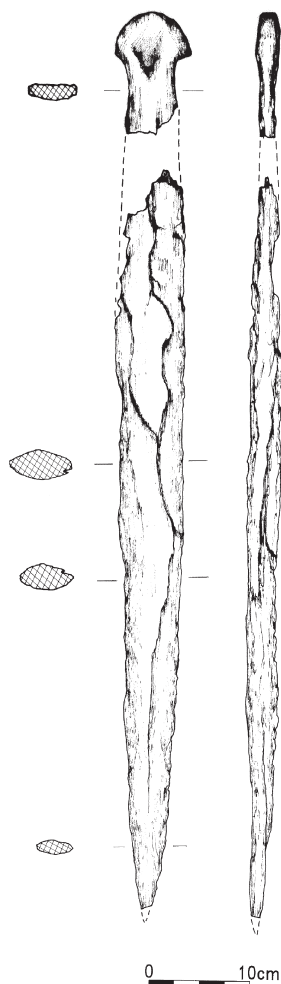


Fig. 7. Iron sword from Burial 8200.

An Iron Sword

An iron sword was found standing vertically near the right side of the skull in Burial 8200. The sword (Fig. 7) was badly corroded and is reconstructed from two fragments as being ca. 74 cm long. It has flat handle ending in a wide, rounded and protruding upper part. No rivets or any other traces of a wooden handle were found.

Very few long iron swords are known from Israel. The earliest is a sword of similar dimensions found in Family Tomb 1 at Achzib, Phase 1, which was dated to the 10th century B.C.E. (E. Mazar 2004: 117, 122; Fig. 29:8). It recalls our sword in its length, the fact that the handle and blade were made as one unit, and the rounded widening of the handle's end. However, at Achzib the handle has two protrusions probably intended to hold wooden parts in place. Two swords are mentioned as being found at Horvat Rosh Zayit (Gal and Alexandre 2000: 129), but were not illustrated. The largest Iron Age sword in Israel is the one found at Vered Jericho, south of Jericho, in a late 7th century B.C.E. context (Eitan 1994). It is 1.04 m long; the blade and hilt are made of iron as one unit, the 6 cm wide blade is double-edged, and the 2–4 cm wide hilt ends in a crescent-shaped top, 6 cm wide. Compare a few iron swords of similar length to ours from Cyprus, appearing from the 11th century B.C.E. onwards (Snodgrass 1981). The simple shape of our sword has almost no parallels among the few iron swords known from the Levant and Cyprus. The long and straight sword is often depicted on Assyrian reliefs as a standard weapon of Assyrian soldiers (Yadin 1963: 388–461, with numerous examples appearing in most of the reliefs). The Assyrian swords shown in the reliefs usually have a distinct pommel and appear to be more elaborate than our example.⁶

A Bronze Fibula (Fig. 8:3)

This fibula is triangular (length 3.2 cm, height 2 cm). Its two arms are square in section, slightly thickened, with preserved remains of textile. Such simple fibulae are known from various Iron II sites in the Levant, Cyprus, Egypt, and Northern Syria, in 8th–6th century B.C.E. contexts (i.e., Pedde 2000: 239–40; Taf. 53: Nos. 706–13; for two similar fibulae from En Gedi Stratum V, see Stern 2007: 176–77,

is bounded by an additional incised line, and the triangles, as well as the above-mentioned space, are filled with small incisions. I wish to thank E. Oren for showing me a photograph of this jar.

6. For the suggestion that curved swords were depicted as booty from Lachish on Sennacherib's reliefs, see Maeir 1996 (with references for other studies on Iron Age swords).

Fig. 4.10.2.1:1–2). Our fibula is somewhat exceptional in its small size and the right angle of the upper part.

Bronze Bowl (Fig. 8:6)

This carinated bronze bowl has a flaring rim and a rounded base (rim diameter 12.6 cm, height 5 cm). Assyrian and Phoenician carinated metal bowls are well known throughout the Assyrian-dominated regions of the ancient Near East. Yet, most discussions of these metal bowls refer to flat, fluted bowls with an omphalos base, often decorated (for an example from the altar room at Tel Dan, see Biran 1986: 186–87), while simple deep carinated bowls like our example are rarely discussed, and their origin and distribution remain to be further explored (Hamilton 1966; Greer 2010: 32–35). A similar bowl is shown in an Assyrian relief from the time of Tiglath-pileser III, in the hands of participants in a royal banquet (Hamilton 1966: 5, Fig. 5:c). The shape of our bowl recalls Assyrian-shaped pottery bowls found at several sites in Israel (Amiran 1969: 99:1–3). Such metal bowls served as drinking or libation vessels and our example may perhaps be considered a personal drinking vessel of the interred individual.

Additional Metal Items from Burial 8200

Other metal objects found in Burial 8200 include: a 32.6 cm long iron dagger with two iron rivets, probably intended to hold a wooden handle (Fig. 8:8); one iron and one bronze ring (Fig. 8:1–2); one iron and one bronze bracelet, the latter decorated with short incisions (Fig. 8: 4–5); and an unusual broken iron object with a bronze ring-shaped handle, partly wrapped by bronze thread (Fig. 8:7).

Objects between Burials 8200 and 8209 (Not Illustrated)

Other burial gifts were found in the deposit between Burials 8200 and 8209 and included two imported Cypriot miniature vessels: a small Black-on-Red amphoriskos (height 8 cm), and a miniature Bichrome bottle. Both lack close parallels and require further study. Next to them was a badly preserved ivory bottle with a flaring rim and a flat base, as well as some 80 beads that probably belonged to one necklace. The beads were of a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials: 8 of carnelian, one of amethyst, 8 of various other stones, 64 tiny faience beads, and a large “divider” bead.

Interpretation

The burials belong to a period following the destruction of the Israelite city at Rehov; a closer date during the Assyrian domination (732–ca. 640/630 B.C.E.) cannot be defined. The presence of Assyrian-shaped vessels in four of these five burials probably indicates that they were of soldiers or officials in the Assyrian administration and their family members. Since only small parts of the upper mound at Tel Rehov have been excavated, it is impossible to say how many such tombs were dug on the mound, yet their number could be large, since they were found in three widely dispersed excavation areas. They could be related to an Assyrian period settlement; though no evidence for such a settlement was found in Areas A, B, and J, it could have been a small settlement or an administrative complex at the top of the mound. At Hazor, a large citadel stood on the western edge of the

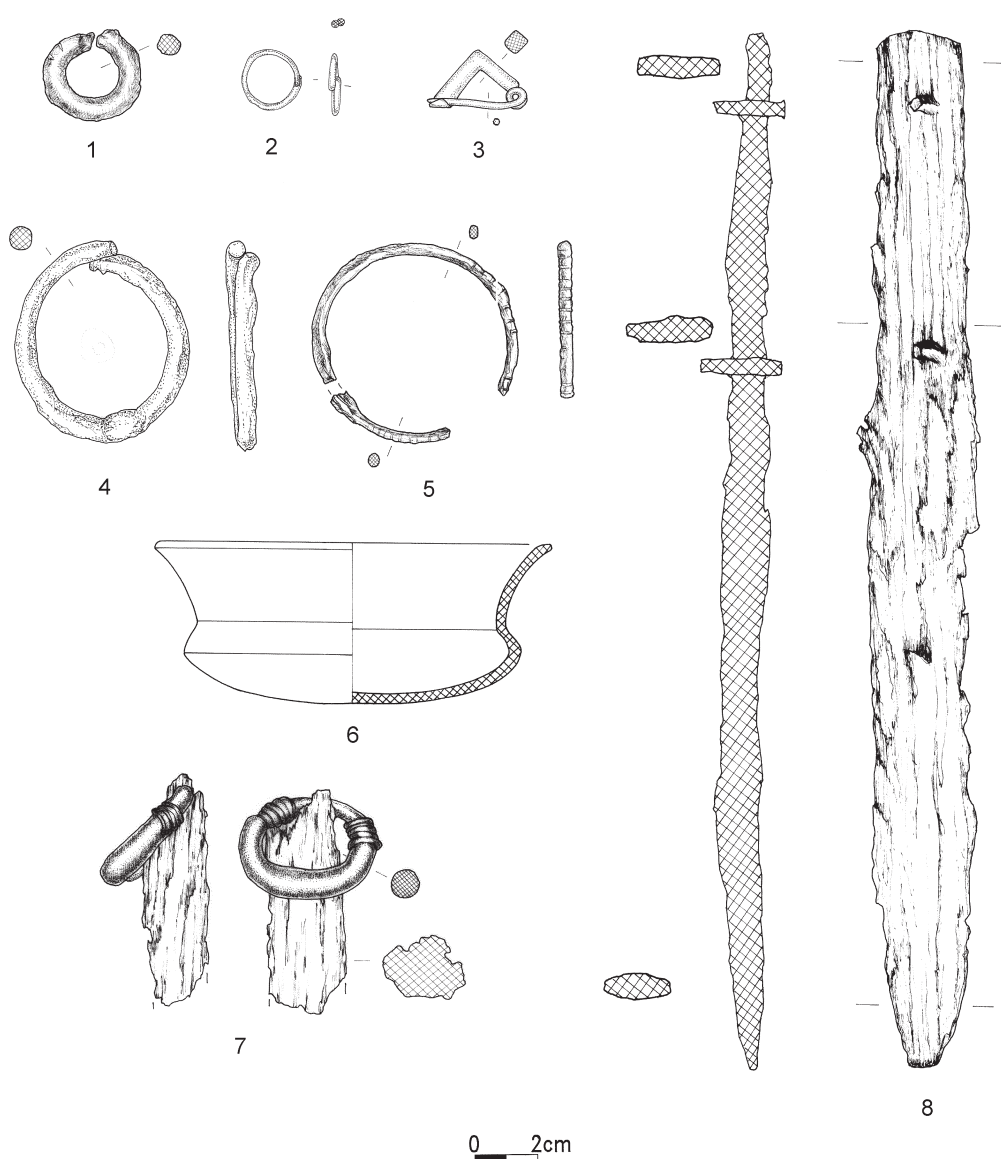


Fig. 8. Various metal objects from Burial 8200.

mound during the Assyrian period, while the rest of the mound remained unsettled (Yadin 1972: 191–94). A similar situation may have existed at Tel Rehov, and the burials arranged in a semicircle extending from Area J in the south through Area A until Area B at the northern end of the upper mound may have surrounded such an administrative center. The fact that one of the burials is that of a child (Locus

8209) means that there were families living at the site, perhaps those of the Assyrian administrators.

Burial 8200 is particularly rich. It seems to be the grave of a soldier; his skull type indicates that he could have originated from Northern Syria or Eastern Anatolia, and perhaps was recruited to the Assyrian army. His burial goods included two iron weapons (long sword and dagger); a bronze bowl (possibly his personal drinking vessel); his personal ornaments, including two rings and two bracelets, an elaborate necklace; and three imported ointment bottles—one of ivory and two of pottery imported from Cyprus. Some of these objects were perhaps looted during warfare. The most enigmatic finds are the Judahite decanter and the Hebrew seal (see below). The decanter probably originated in Jerusalem or its surroundings, and thus may have been looted in Judah (perhaps full of wine?), either during the campaign of Sennacherib or later; alternatively, it may provide evidence for limited trade between Assyrian officials and Judah (perhaps involving the purchase of Judahite wine) during the 7th century B.C.E. The presence of such a decanter at Tel ‘Amal, in similar burials with Assyrian bottles, may indicate that ours is not an isolated case, and more should be expected. The seal presents a riddle (see discussion by Aḥituv below): why was it placed on the chest of the deceased? It is not feasible that this was his own seal, since all indications are that he was a foreigner. The only possible explanation seems to be that the seal was also looted or found during the warfare in the Land of Israel. It is impossible to say whether the seal originated in Northern Israel or in Judah.

The Seal of ‘Ūlēm
by
Shmuel Aḥituv

This excellently preserved scaraboid-shaped seal (Figs. 9–10; length 24 mm, width 18 mm, height 10 mm) is made of limestone with a yellowish patina. The seal, which shows only little signs of wear, was found on the chest of the skeleton in Burial 8200 in Area B (see above). The bottom of the seal bears a winged sun-disc, a known motif in Hebrew, as well as in Phoenician, Aramaic, and Ammonite seals (Ornan 2005). This one has six rays, three protruding upward and three downward, like the winged sun-disc on a bulla stamped with the royal seal of King Hezekiah (Deutsch 2003: No. 1), and on the seals of *S’dh*, “Sā‘adāh” (WSS: No. 284), and *’lyšb*, “’Elyāšīb” (Deutsch and Lemaire 2003: No. 22). The upper part bears the name of the seal’s owner, and a space-filler at its end. The sun-disc on the lower register of the seal of *S’dh* (WSS: No. 284) is similar to our seal in its form of straight stretched wings, clearly emphasizing the feathers, and in its six rays. The workmanship is also similar, the sun-disc being a symmetrical, round depression, made with a drill (cf. also the Phoenician seal of *Yzbl*, WSS: No. 740). Both seals have similar space-fillers, but while ours has a curved leg, the *S’dh* seal has a straight shaft; in both seals the head of the space-filler was drilled. Such a space-filler, with a straight shaft, appears also on the Phoenician seal WSS: No. 718.⁷

7. It is impossible to decide if the space-filler has any connection to the Egyptian Ankh-symbol. However if originally there was such a connection it was lost in the seal with the curved leg.

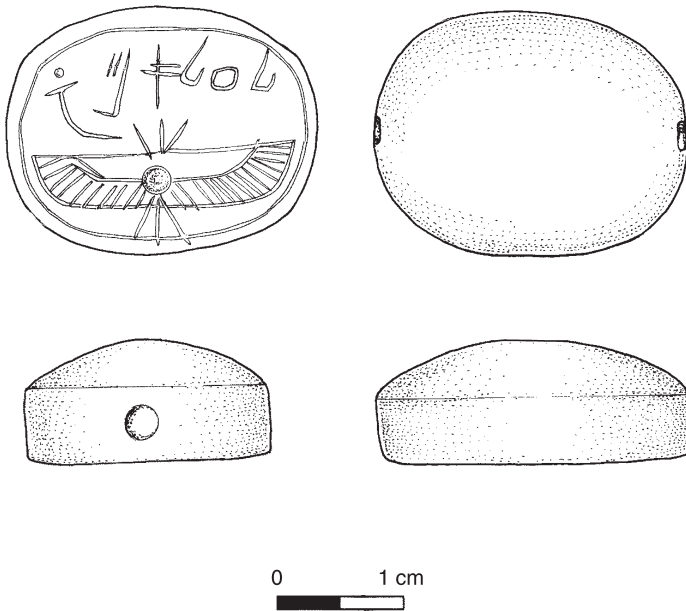


Fig. 9. The seal of *ʿPm* (drawing).



Fig. 10. The seal of *ʿPm* (photo).

The script is typical of Hebrew seals of the late 8th–early 7th centuries B.C.E. Note especially the *mem*, whose head is composed of the upper part of the leg and two unconnected strokes; cf. the seals of *ʿšyw bn Ywqm*, “*ʿAšāyāw* son of *Yāwqîm*” (WSS: No. 316) and of *šmʿ bn Zkryw*, “*Šemāʿ* son of *Zʿkaryāw*” (WSS: No. 371), both from Northern Israel, according to the theophoric suffix *Yw*, typical of names from Israel, as opposed to the form *Yhw* in Judahite names.

The name on our seal is quite enigmatic. It reads clearly *lʿPm*, “(belonging) to *ʿPm*.”⁸ The name *ʿPm* is a nominal sentence in which the second component is *ʿēm*, “mother.” The name *ʿPm* is a hapax, and as far as I know is unencountered, either in the Bible or in Semitic epigraphy. The number of names composed with

8. There is no doubt that the name is complete, as there is a space-filler after it.

the component 'ēm , “mother,” is less common than names composed with 'b ('āb), “father,” 'h ('āh), “brother,” 'm ('am), “kinfolk,” etc.

One of David’s heroes is 'āhî'ām (2 Sam 23:36; 1 Chron 11:35). The second component in the name ('am) is meaningless,⁹ but if we ignore the vocalization of the masoretic text we can read the name as 'āhî'ēm (Gray 1896: 83; Nöldeke 1904: 95) “(The) mother’s brother,” i.e., “maternal uncle.” The proposed reading, 'āhî'ēm , is supported by one of the Septuagint versions in 1 Chron 11:35: Αχ(ε)ιμ . Thus, a name like 'āhî'ēm may be compared to the name 'h'mh ('āhî'immôh), “His mother’s brother,” on Hebrew seals and seal impressions from the First Temple Period (WSS: Nos. 54, 429, 618).

The component *umm*, “mother,” is quite frequent in Akkadian onomastics, thus: *Abi-umme*, “The mother’s father,” i.e., grandfather; *Ummi-abia*, “My father’s mother,” i.e., grandmother; *Aḫi-ummišu*, “His mother’s brother,” i.e., his uncle (Stamm 1939: 302); *Ištar-Larsa-ummi*, “Ishtar of Larsa is my mother” (Stamm 1939: 83); *Ištar-ummi*, “Ishtar is my mother”; *Ištar-ummaša*, “Ishtar is her mother” (Stamm 1939: 209); *Ummi-tābat*, “My mother is good” (Stamm 1939: 294), etc.

As for the component 'l , it can be interpreted as a shortened form of 'elyon , “most high,” as in the biblical name 'ly , “ 'Ēlî ” (1 Sam 1:3, etc.), a hypocoristic of 'lyhw , “ 'Ēlîyāhû ,” attested in a few Hebrew seals and seal impressions: *lbnyhw 'lyhw*, “(Belonging) to B 'nāyāhû (son of) 'Ēlîyāhû ” (WSS: No. 460); *l'lyhw ḥlš*, “(Belonging) to 'Ēlîyāhû (son of) Hēleš” (WSS: No. 603); *l'lyhw rp*, “(Belonging) to 'Ēlîyāhû (son of) Rāpū” (WSS: No. 604); or the name *yhw'ly* (Yhō 'ēlî), reversing the order of the components, on the seal *lyhw'ly* “(Belonging) to Yhō 'ēlî ” (WSS: No. 181) and *l'h'mh 'lyhw*, “(Belonging) to Aḫî 'immôh (son of) 'Ēlîyāhû ” (Mänher 1992: 68–69, and pl.). The Northern Israelite form of the name was 'lyw , as on the seal *l'lyw* “(Belonging) to 'Ēlîyāw ” (WSS: No. 313).

If we accept a derivation from the root 'ly , the interpretation of the name 'l'm should be “The mother is most high.” Such a name is most unlikely in Hebrew onomastics of the Israelite-Judahite patriarchal androcentric societies of the First Temple period. As a matter of fact, there is only one exception in West Semitic epigraphy, namely, the dubious name *qws'm* on the Edomite seal *[lqw]s'm l'd'l*, “(Belonging) to Qōs 'ēm , (Belonging) to Adî 'ēl ” (WSS: No. 1056). If the name is complete, it should be interpreted “Qōs (the Edomite national deity) is a mother,” compare the Ugaritic attribute of the god Ashtar: *ttr'm*, “Aštar is a mother.” But as such names are rare in West Semitic epigraphy, I prefer to vocalize the component 'l as 'ul , a by-form of 'l/wll = 'ōlāl , “a young child, baby” (Isa 49:15; 65:20; cf. also the Tell Deir 'Alla Balaam Inscription, Combination II:13–14; Aḫituv 2008: 454–55, 463), and compare the biblical name 'Ūllā' (1 Chron 7: 39), which is also the name of four Amoraim (talmudic sages). The name 'l is attested on seals and seal impressions: 'l' št šlm “ 'Ūllā' wife of Šāllūm” (Deutsch 2003: No. 44a–e; 2003a: No. 12a–b); 'lh , “ 'Ūllāh ” (WSS: no. 1168), and the Ammonite seal *l'p bt 'mr*, “(Belonging) to 'Ūlā' daughter of 'Immēr .”

9. Noth (1928: 192) proposed equating the second component in the name 'āhî'ām with Arabic *āma*, “to rule, govern,” but this is a questionable derivation.

A name like *‘Ūl’ēm*, “(His/The) mother’s babe/child,” might be given to a child in special cases, like a child whose father is unknown, an orphan, or what seems to be more logical, to a beloved son to his mother. It is likely that the choice of the component *‘ūl*, “babe,” and not another appellative pertaining to a special affection to the child, was chosen because the composition of the name with the component *’ēm*, “mother,” thus emphasizing the close relation between the son and the mother, cf. Isaiah 49:15: “Can a woman forget her baby, or disown the child of her womb?”

How such a typical Hebrew seal came into the possession of an Assyrian soldier is an enigma. The most probable answer is that it is a spoil of war taken from the body of an Israelite citizen or a soldier killed in a battle, or from a captive.

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The Shephelah according to the Amarna Letters

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An examination of the Egyptian sources of the New Kingdom reveals that the Shephelah held a marginal place in the outlook of the Egyptian government and its scribes. Several Egyptian kings (Thutmose III, Amenophis II, Seti I) conducted campaigns to the Land of Canaan and left detailed lists of the toponyms they passed on their way northward. Yet, except for the city of Gezer, named in a few Egyptian inscriptions (Ahituv 1984: 101–2), no other town in the Shephelah is mentioned. The Shephelah is also absent from all other Egyptian topographical lists that enumerate cities in the Land of Canaan (Simons 1959; Helck 1971: 256–309; Edel 1980; Ahituv 1984), and from Papyrus Anastasi I, which describes various regions and towns in Canaan (Wilson 1969; Helck 1971: 314–19; Fischer-Elfert 1986; Lichtheim 2003). The list of disbursements to Canaanite envoys (*maryannu*) in Amenophis II's 18th year lists the envoy of Lachish apart from the group of envoys who were probably sent on official missions to Egypt (Helck 1963: 620 line 2; 1971: 166, 559; Epstein 1963).

The marginal position of the Shephelah in the Egyptian outlook is remarkable when it is compared with other districts in Canaan. The south-to-north route from the border of Egypt to the Plain of Jezreel (the so-called “Via Maris”), the coastal area from Acco northward, the Plains of Jezreel and Beth Shean, the area of Bashan, the eastern Mount Anti Lebanon region, and the Beqa' of Lebanon—all are amply attested in the Egyptian sources. The central hill country between the Plain of Jezreel and the Beersheba Valley is missing from the Egyptian topographical lists, and this is explained by its remoteness from the Egyptian routes and centers of government, its sparse settlement, and its meager economic potential. Unlike the hill country, the Shephelah was closer to the Egyptian centers of government and to the main south to north route, was more densely settled in the Late Bronze Age, and had an economic (mainly agriculture) potential. Yet it is the least mentioned region among the districts of Canaan. The omission of the Shephelah from the topographical lists of the time of the Eighteenth–Nineteenth Dynasties calls for an explanation.

To clarify the situation in the Shephelah in the Amarna period and its place in the Egyptian system of government, I will first examine the network of Canaanite city-states in this region in light of the Amarna letters. Next, I will present the archaeological evidence for the city-state centers in south Canaan and their potential for establishing the network of city-states in this area. I will then examine in detail

the documentary evidence for the Shephelah in the 14th century B.C.E. Following these discussions I will present an overall picture of the Shephelah in light of the documentary and the archaeological evidence.

*The Network of City-States in the Shephelah
according to the Amarna Letters*

Contrary to the picture that emerges from the Egyptian sources, the number of letters sent to the pharaoh by rulers of Canaanite city-states located in the Shephelah is remarkable: 12 letters from the three rulers of Gezer (EA 268–72,¹ 292–93, 297–300, 378); 11 letters from the two rulers of Gath (Tell eš-Šāfi) (EA 278–84, 63, 65, 335, 366); 6 letters from the three rulers of Lachish (EA 329, 330–32, 311²); 2 or 3 letters from Yaḥzib-Hadda (EA 275–76 and possibly 277); 2 letters from Belit-labi'at,³ (EA 273–74); one letter from Aḥṭiruna (EA 319) and one letter from 'Abdina' (EA 229) (Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 284–85, 286). Finally, one tablet was uncovered in the excavations at Tell el-Ḥesi and was included in the corpus of Amarna letters (EA 333).

What is the minimal number of Canaanite city-states located in the Shephelah in the Amarna period? To establish this we must first set the criteria for estimation (see Na'aman 1997: 601–7). Only the Amarna letters are available for the investigation.⁴ The Egyptian administration treated the local rulers of Canaan as Egyptian mayors and held them responsible for everything that happened in their cities. Each vassal was personally responsible to the pharaoh for the territory he held, and in his letters he reported back to Egypt that he had fulfilled all the obligations imposed on his domain. Hence, each person who wrote to the pharaoh or to his officials was a city-state ruler, regardless of the scope of his territory or his political power.

If the Amarna archive were complete, the task of making a list of city-states would have been relatively easy. Unfortunately, this is not the case. First, an unknown number of tablets were either transferred from Akhetaten (Amarna) when the royal court abandoned the place, or destroyed when the archive was discovered and before the importance of the tablets was recognized (Na'aman 1997: 602,

1. Rainey (2003: 201–2) collated EA 272 and suggested deciphering the badly worn line 3 *um-ma* ^dIŠKUR.DI.KUD [IR-ka].

2. For the origin of tablet EA 311, see Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 289.

3. The name of the queen who sent EA 273–374 is written 'NIN.UR.MAH^{mes} ("lady of the lioness"; see Bauer 1920). Formerly, on the basis of two Ugaritic texts, I suggested rendering the name as Bēlit-nešēti (Na'aman 1979: 680 n. 32). However, recent collations of the two Ugaritic texts have shown that the reading *nešēti/nṯt* was mistaken (see Singer 1999: 697–98). Thus, there is no evidence for rendering the ideographic writing UR.MAH^{mes} as *nešēti*. As an alternative reading I suggest rendering it *labi'at* ("lioness"). The name *'bdlb't* appears on arrowheads discovered at el-Ḥaḍr (near Bethlehem) and in Ugaritic texts (*'bdlbit*). Labi'at ("lioness") was probably an epithet of the goddess 'Ashtartu (see Milik and Cross 1954: 6–9; Gröndahl 1967: 154; Donner and Röllig 1968: 29). See also the toponyms Lebaoth/Beth-Lebaoth mentioned in Josh 15:32; 19:6. In light of the textual evidence I suggest rendering 'NIN.UR.MAH^{mes} as Bēlit-labi'at.

4. The Hieratic inscription written on a bowl that was discovered in Lachish was recently republished by Sweeney 2004: 1601–7. She deciphered its central part "Ruler of Nentisha, Ya[. . .]." Nentisha (if this is the correct rendering of the toponym) was probably an unknown city-state located in the Shephelah in the 12th century B.C.E.

with earlier literature). Second, the seats of many rulers who corresponded with the pharaoh remain unknown, either because the names of their towns were not mentioned, or because the tablets they sent were broken and the town names are missing. The recent petrographic analysis helped to locate the region and even the place from which some tablets were sent (Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004), but the seats of some rulers are still unknown. Third, the cities of some rulers whose letters have not come down to us, but whose names are mentioned in the correspondence, are not known.

The Amarna archive covers about 25 years, from ca. the 30th year of Amenophis III to Tutankhamun's third year. How many kings might have ruled in each place in the course of that quarter of a century? The Phoenician coast is amply documented, and the number of kings in each place (with the exception of Achshaph) was two. Three successive kings are known from only Gezer and Lachish; and in theory, a single long-living ruler might have governed in some cities. An average of two, and at most three, kings may safely be assumed for the Shephelah during the archive's quarter century (Na'aman 1997: 604–5).

With these criteria in mind let me try to establish the minimal number of city-state rulers in the Shephelah. The most important kingdoms were Gezer, Lachish, and Gath (Tell eṣ-Šāfi). Three mayors ruled in Gezer (Milki-Ilu, Yapaḥu, Ba'lu-dānu⁵) and Lachish (Zimredda, Shipti-Ba'lu, Yabni-Ilu), and two in Gath (Shuwardata and 'Abdi-Ashtarti).⁶ Shuwardata was in power in the days of Lab'ayu and his sons, and 'Abdi-Ashtarti, his heir, ruled in the late years of the archive. Thus it is unlikely that a third ruler governed the place (Na'aman 1979: 676–84). We may conclude that other rulers known to have ruled in the Shephelah during the Amarna period should be sought in other cities in this region.

Letters EA 273–74 were sent by Bēlit-labi'at, a queen or queen mother, who reports events that took place in Gezer's eastern territory (for a detailed discussion of the letters see below). Her seat should be located in the eastern Shephelah, near the border of the kingdom of Gezer. The best candidate is Tel Beth-Shemesh (Tell er-Rumeileh), a relatively large mound (about 4 ha) located on Gezer's southeastern border (see Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 276–77).⁷

Yaḥzib -Hadda wrote letters EA 275–76; letter EA 277, whose writer's name is broken, has an identical text. Petrographically, EA 275–76 and 277 are identical. The similarity in clay and text suggests that the three letters were written in the same place by the same writer. The clay indicates that they were sent from the eastern Shephelah, possibly the longitudinal valley that separates the Higher Shephelah from the Judean hill country. Of the ancient mounds located along this line, Tel

5. For the transcription Ba'lu-dānu (instead of Ba'lu-šipti), see Van Soldt 2002.

6. The petrographic analysis suggests that two letters of the rulers of Gath (EA 278 of Shuwardata and EA 64 of 'Abdi-Ashtarti) are not made of clay from Tell eṣ-Šāfi's immediate environment. They may have been sent from a town in the Upper Shephelah, east of Gath, such as Qiltu (Khirbet Qīla) (Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 283–85, 286).

7. Tel Beth-Shemesh was a relatively prosperous town in the Late Bronze II (Stratum IV); see summary in Bunimovitz and Lederman 1993: 250, with earlier literature.

Beth-Shemesh is the best candidate for Yaḥzib-Hadda's city (for a detailed discussion, see Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 290–91).

Letter EA 229 is badly broken and was probably sent by 'Abdina (Moran 1992: 290). The petrographic analysis indicates that it was sent from the Upper Shephelah and its material is identical to EA 64 (Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 286). His place might also be sought in one of the mounds located along the longitudinal valley.

Only one letter of Šur-Ašhar, ruler of Aḥtiruna⁸ (EA 319), is known from the archive. It was written in Gaza and belongs to the group of letters that Canaanite rulers dispatched from the Egyptian center (Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 302–3). Since the script, formulae, and vocabulary of EA 319 are typical of south Canaan, Aḥtiruna was probably a small city-state in this region. Its exact location cannot be established.

The writer of the Tell el-Ḥesi letter, who bears the Egyptian name Pa'apu and was possibly a low-ranking Egyptian official, reports to his superior, the magnate, about a conspiracy of two mayors, Šipti-Ba'lu and Zimredda. Zimredda is identified with the ruler of Lachish who was killed in a rebellion (EA 288:43–44; 335:10); Šipti-Ba'lu was probably the ruler of a neighboring place.

The murder of two other rulers, Turbazu and Yaptiḥ-Hadda, is mentioned with that of Zimredda in letters from Jerusalem (EA 288:39–47) and Gath (EA 335:8–18) (Na'aman 1997: 607–8). That all three were mayors is indicated by 'Abdi-Ḥeba's words (EA 288:39–40), "not a single mayor remains to the king, my lord; all are lost," followed by a reference to the slaying of the three rulers. Unlike 'Abdi-Ḥeba, who described events that happened in places far from his city, 'Abdi-Ashtarti (and his predecessor Shuwardata), describes only local affairs. The fact that two rulers ('Abdi-Ḥeba and 'Abdi-Ashtarti), who lived in two different regions, illustrate the growing insecurity in south Canaan by the slaying of the three mayors indicates that the seats of all three should be sought in the same region. Zilû was probably a border town, where the two rulers met and were killed.

The final part of Letter EA 335 (lines 14–18) goes as follows: "May the king, my lord, be informed that the city of Lachish is hostile and the city of Mu'rashti is seized and [the city of x-x]-šî-ki is [host]ile."⁹ It seems that the writer reports first about the slaying of the three mayors (lines 8–10), then relates the consequences of the murders in their respective cities.

Scholars have identified Mu'rashti (biblical Moresheth-gath) at sites located near Naḥal Guvrin, but its exact place remains uncertain (Jeremias 1933; Proksch 1943; Kallai 1962; Schmitt 1990, with earlier literature; Levin 2002). One key to its loca-

8. The name Aḥtiruna is possibly derived from the verb 'tr ("to surround") plus the Semitic suffix -ôn (i.e., 'Aṭirôn), similar to biblical Ataroth ('Aṭārôt), "crowns." Names with the verb 'tr were probably allotted to places located on top of hills/mounds.

9. Moran (1992: 358) tentatively restored it [uru-ru-sa]-lim^{ki}, and some scholars accepted the restoration (Na'aman 1997: 608; Liverani 1998: 88). However, the post-determinative *ki* is missing in the names of the other cities in this tablet. The accord between the number of slain rulers and cities might not be accidental; line 18 might be read [uru-x-x]-šî-ki. Provided that the *ki* sign is post-determinative, the town's name may be restored [uruNe-en-ti]-šî^{ki} and identified with the city mentioned on the Lachish bowl (see n. 4 above).

tion is the biblical name Moresheth-gath (i.e., Moresheth of Gath), which indicates that it had previously been a secondary city within the territory of Philistine Gath (Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi). The city is missing from the list of Judahite towns in the Shephelah (Joshua 15:33–44), which is dated to the time of King Josiah (Alt 1925; Na'aman 1991: 5–33, with earlier literature). Like Moresheth, some other towns mentioned in Micah's dirge on the impending doom of the Kingdom of Judah (Micah 1:8–16) are missing from the town list of Joshua 15:33–44 (ʿAphrah, Shaphir, ʿEriah, and Maroth) (see Na'aman 1995). These towns were all conquered by Sennacherib during his 701 B.C.E. campaign, their inhabitants were deported and all remained deserted during the 7th century. In light of this analysis, Moresheth must be sought at a site located near Naḥal Guvrin, not far from Gath, that was settled in the 14th and 8th centuries B.C.E. and deserted in the 7th century. Tel Zayit (Khirbet Zeitan el-Kharab), a site spread across nearly 30 dunams, located on the western side of Naḥal Guvrin, about 13 km southeast of Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi, fits well all these requirements. The site, recently excavated by Tappy (2000: 28–32; Tappy et al. 2006: 7–9), was settled in the Late Bronze II and Iron Age II and deserted in the 7th century, and may safely be identified with Amarna Muʿrashti and biblical Moresheth-gath.¹⁰

Tentatively I suggest that Shipti-Baʿlu mentioned in EA 333 and Turbazu were mayors of this city. The neighboring city [xx]shiki may have been the city of Yaptiḥ-Hadda.

The following rulers are mentioned in reference to the rebellions in the Shephelah in the late Amarna period: Milki-Ilu and Yapaḥu of Gezer; Shuwardata and ʿAbdi-Ashtarti of Gath; Zimredda and Shipti-Baʿlu of Lachish; Turbazu (possibly of Muʿrashti) and Yaptiḥ-Hadda (possibly of [xx]shiki). Thus, rulers of five different city-states are mentioned at one and the same time.

Summing up the discussion, it is clear that side by side with the three major centers of Gezer, Gath, and Lachish, there were several small city-states located near their borders. Tel Beth-Shemesh was probably the seat of Bēlit-labiʿat and Yaḥzib-Hadda. Muʿrashti was possibly the seat of Shipti-Baʿlu and Turbazu, and [xx]shiki might have been the seat of Yaptiḥ-Hadda. The seat of ʿAbdina should be sought along the longitudinal valley. The location of Aḥṭiruna, Ṣur-Ashar's seat, is unknown. It is clear that about six/seven different city-states existed in the time of the Amarna archive, and that large mounds, such as Tell ʿAiṭun and Tell Beit Mirsim, might have been the seats of city-states' rulers (for the Late Bronze in the Shephelah, see Dagan 2000: 150–71).

It is remarkable that each of the identified city-states stood near one of the main rivers of the Shephelah. Gezer is located near Naḥal Ayyalon (Wādi Kabir); Beth-Shemesh on Naḥal Sorek (Wādi eṣ-Ṣarar); Gath on Naḥal Elah (Wādi ʿAjjur and Wādi es-Sant); Muʿrashti near Naḥal Guvrin (Wādi Zeita); Lachish on Naḥal Lachish (Wādi Qubeba); Tell ʿAiṭun near Naḥal Adorayim (Wādi Umm Suweilim). It

10. Tappy (2008: 386–87) recently suggested identifying the city of Libnah with Tel Zayit. However, the latter site was not inhabited during the 7th century, and this fact is not in line with the mention of Libnah as the birthplace of Hamutal, wife of Josiah and mother of Jehoahaz (2 Kgs 23:31) and Zedekiah (2 Kgs 24:18), indicating that during that time Libnah was a town of some importance in the kingdom of Judah.

seems that the territories of the city-states stretched along the main rivers and their tributaries, each dominating a number of villages and hamlets in its district.

*Can Archaeology Establish the Number of
City-States in South Canaan?*

The analysis of the documentary evidence established the assumed number of city-states located in the Shephelah in the Amarna period. Can archaeological exploration contribute further evidence to elaborate on the picture? To answer this question we must ask, which elements should be sought in the site of a city-state? Ostensibly the answer is clear: a Canaanite ruler had a palace, a temple or temples, public buildings for his court, administration and production, and his capital may be identified by signs of economic prosperity and prestige artifacts. With these expectations in mind, scholars have suggested that the sites of city-states should be sought only in major mounds, each commanding a large territory with considerable population, whereas smaller sites, which did not produce rich archaeological findings and commanded small territories, could not have been the centers of city-states (Finkelstein 1996; Finkelstein in Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 231, 247, 265, 270, 287, 291, 320–22).

Are these expectations realistic for the Amarna period? Can archaeological research produce evidence for differentiating the centers of city-states from secondary towns in their territories? This question has not until now been discussed in detail. To clarify it, I will examine the results of the archaeological excavations conducted in three of the five major south Canaanite cities mentioned in the Amarna archive—namely, Jerusalem, Gezer, and Lachish. The two other major cities, Gath and Ashkelon, cannot supply the archaeological data necessary for the investigation.

I have already discussed in detail the overwhelming contrast between the evidence of the Amarna letters and the results of the archaeological excavations conducted in Jerusalem (Na'aman 1996). Upon reading the seven letters sent from Jerusalem (EA 285–91), scholars would expect the excavations to reveal a medium-sized, thriving city in the Late Bronze Age, but these expectations were totally dashed. So poor is the finding from that period that some scholars doubted the identification of the *Urusalim* mentioned in the Amarna letters with the city of Jerusalem (Franken and Steiner 1992). But of course there is no doubt about it. The discrepancy between the documents and the archaeological finding can mostly be explained by the state of preservation of the settlement strata from the Amarna period. Jerusalem was inhabited continuously through thousands of years, and given that the bedrock at the site is very high and there is little accumulation of strata on top of it, every new settlement damaged the previous strata. Whereas the remains of well-built robust structures constructed in periods of prosperity, such as the Middle Bronze III, Iron II, and the late Hellenistic periods, are preserved, those that were originally skimpy and fragile, and often built on top of earlier buildings, might have disappeared completely. For this reason, only a few fragile remnants survived from the poorly-built Late Bronze Canaanite city, and the same picture

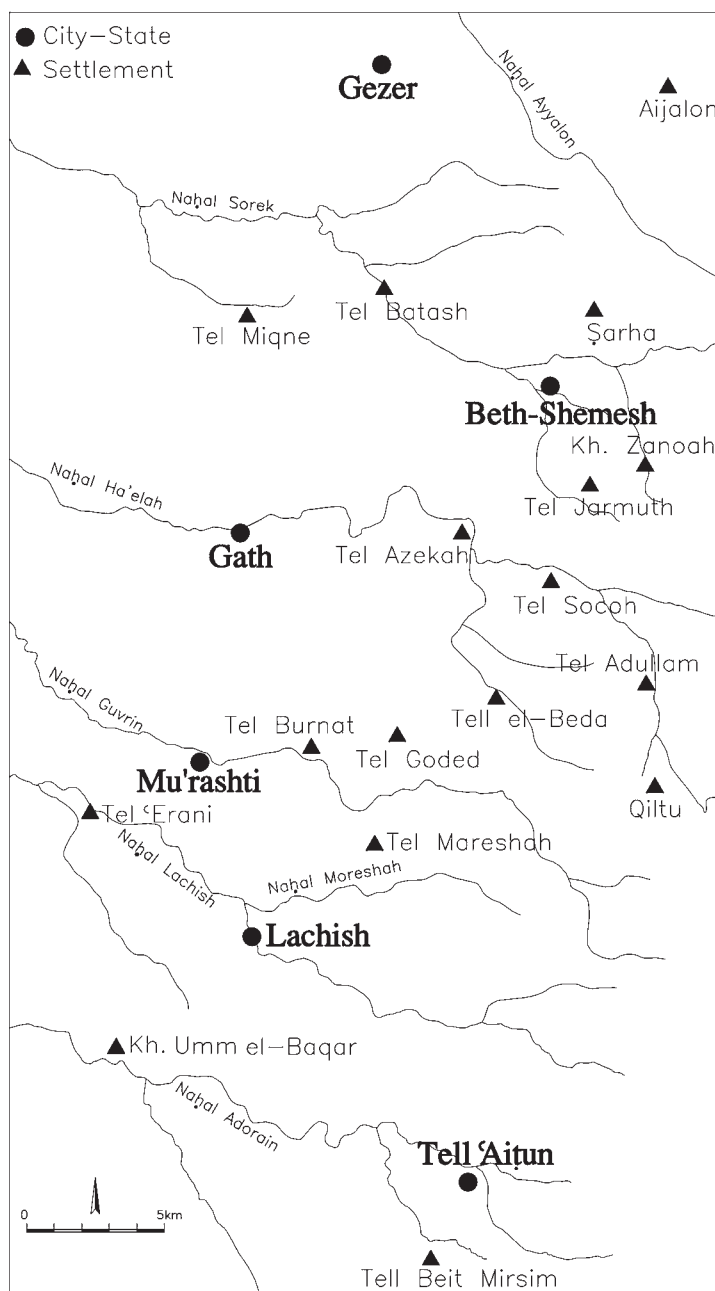


Fig. 1. The Shephelah in the Late Bronze Age: city-states and settlements.

emerges from the study of other periods of decline in the history of Jerusalem, such as the Iron Age I-IIA and the Persian and early Hellenistic periods.

The Amarna tablets show that Gezer was one of the most important kingdoms in Canaan and that its rulers played leading parts in the conflicts that took place during the Amarna period. Milki-Ilu, the most prominent ruler of Gezer, formed

alliances with rulers in the territory ranging from Piḥilu, a kingdom in the northern Gilead, to Gath (Tell eṣ-Šāfi). Gezer's location on the country's main south-to-north route, and on the main road from the Shephelah to the highlands, and its proximity to the port of Jaffa, one of the centers of Egyptian power in the land, gave its rulers a key position in the relationships in south and central Canaan. The overall picture that emerges from the correspondence is of a strong and flourishing kingdom, which maintained connections with other centers near and far.

Gezer was excavated in the early stage of the archaeological research (1902–9), and again in 1964–73 (and limited-scale excavations in 1984 and 1990) (Dever 1993a, with earlier literature). The excavations unearthed some buildings from the Late Bronze II (Stratum XVI), but no public buildings have been found, in contrast to the large, fortified, thriving city of the Middle Bronze Age II–III (Dever 1993a: 502–503; 2003: 263–66, with earlier literature). Dever, who excavated the site, ascribed the so-called “outer wall” to the Late Bronze Age, and argued that the city was fortified at that time (Dever 1986; 1993b; 2003); but this is unlikely, and there can be no doubt that this wall was built during the Iron Age II, while in the Late Bronze Age the city was unfortified (Kempinski 1976: 212–13; Ussishkin 1990: 212–13; Finkelstein 1981; 1994, with earlier literature; Yanai 1994). Few domestic structures, some burials and pottery, including vessels imported from Egypt and Cyprus, were found in the large-scale excavations conducted at the site. If our knowledge of the place were based entirely on the archaeological finding, we would have concluded that Gezer was, at most, an unimportant city-state, and no one would have thought that it was one of the leading city-states in the array of Canaanite city-states during the Amarna period.

The letters of the three rulers of Lachish are short and do not provide many data. The city is mentioned twice by ‘Abdi-Ḥeba, king of Jerusalem. On one occasion Lachish is mentioned alongside Gezer and Ashkelon, the two most important kingdoms in south Canaan (EA 287:14–16), and on another occasion in reference to the murder of its ruler Zimredda (EA 288:43). It is commonly accepted that during the Late Bronze Age Lachish was the most important city in the southern Shephelah, so one would expect to find evidence to support this in the extensive excavations conducted at the site (for the results of the excavations, see Tufnell, Inge, and Harding 1940; Tufnell et al. 1958; Ussishkin 1993: 899–900; Barkay and Ussishkin 2004: 344–51).

Yet the excavations have shown that the city's heyday in the Late Bronze began only in the 13th century (Level VI), no doubt under the Egyptian aegis. Findings from the 14th century (Level VII) were quite meager, principally a modest-sized temple built in the moat of the Middle Bronze fortifications, containing rich offerings to the local deity (Tufnell 1940). However, modest-sized temples are known from large and small cities in Canaan and do not indicate the political status of the place. Several private structures and many tombs containing funerary objects, including vessels imported from Cyprus and the Aegean world, have also been found. The city of Lachish was unwallled throughout the Late Bronze Age, and no public buildings from the Amarna period have been found. We may state with certainty that, without the historical documentation, scholars would have assumed that Late

Bronze Lachish became an important city-state only in the 13th century, doubtless under Egyptian overlordship, and that earlier it had been either an unimportant city-state, or a provincial city in the territory of a neighboring kingdom.

There is a striking discrepancy between the evidence of the Amarna letters concerning Jerusalem, Gezer, and Lachish and that of the archaeological excavations conducted at the three sites. To illustrate it we need only ask, what kind of picture would the archaeologists have imagined if the settlement strata and the findings dated to the Amarna period were connected to a time for which we had no written documentation? In that case, the archaeologists would have concluded that sites like Gezer and Lachish were either unimportant city-states or provincial towns in the territories of the neighboring kingdoms. Jerusalem would have been thought of as a village in a sparsely inhabited highland region.

How should we explain the discrepancy between the documentary and archaeological evidence? Following the utter destruction of the prosperous Middle Bronze III urban culture, the country experienced a major decline, and this is attested in the excavations and surveys of the Late Bronze Age I–II. When the urban culture is at a low ebb, structures of lesser strength and quality are built, and these often on the foundations of solid structures from an earlier time. In multi-strata tells, these poor structures can easily be obliterated by later building operations. This is especially true of highlands sites, where the bedrock is high and late construction and leveling can remove almost all traces of the earlier buildings and their artifacts. Archaeological research can identify the fragmented remains and establish their date and function. But the erosion and obliteration of a considerable part of the evidence by later operations and the fragmented state of preservation of the structures as well as the dispersal of the artifacts on many occasions preclude the possibility of reconstructing the ancient reality.

Clearly, the archaeological excavations at Jerusalem, Gezer, and Lachish, the three major south Canaanite city-states, failed to supply criteria for defining a city-state and for differentiating city-states from secondary towns in their territory. Scholars have argued that only large sites were the centers of city-states, whereas the structures unearthed in medium-sized sites are too poor, the territory they controlled was not large enough, and the size of the population inhabiting these places was insufficient for city-states—but none of these arguments is based on concrete evidence. On the contrary, with regard to the cities' political status and strength *vis-à-vis* their neighbors, especially in periods of decline, archaeology is severely limited. We may conclude that the number of Canaanite city-states in the Shephelah should be established on the basis of the documentary evidence alone, whereas archaeology, useful as it is in many aspects of the urban and material culture, cannot supply concrete data for the investigation.

The Qiltu Affair

A prominent feature in the "Shephelah correspondence" is the large number of letters that describe rebellions, conditions of insecurity, and disruption of the internal order. Admittedly, rulers all over Canaan emphasized internal crises and asked the pharaoh to intervene on their behalf, so the stress on domestic disorder and

difficulties is known from many places. Nevertheless, the emphasis on these elements in the Shephelah correspondence requires elucidation. It seems to me that most of the *gewald* letters refer to one of two major events: the Qiltu affair, and the widespread rebellions that broke out all over the region in the late Amarna period. Let me open the discussion by reconstructing the crisis centered on Qiltu, an episode not clarified before in the research of the Amarna archive.

Qiltu (biblical Keilah, today Khirbet Qîla) is located close to the mountain plateau, near the southeastern border of Gath. Shuwardata described the situation in Qiltu as follows (for the restorations, see Moran 1992: 279; Rainey 1989–90: 71; Liverani 1998: 82; Smith 1998: 148–49):

EA 279:9–23: May the king, my lord, know that the land of the king, my lord, is lost b[y] going fo[rt]h [t]o the r[ebels] (LÚ^{mes} š[a-ru-ti]). May the [king] permi[t me] to wage w[ar] (yu-uš-ši-[ra-ni LUGAL e]-pé-[ši] n[u-kur-ta]). May the king, my lord, wr[ji]te to his] mayo[rs] ([ù li-i]š-[pu-ra a-na LÚ^{mes} Ḫa-za-nu-[ti-šu]), so that we may attack them and drive out the rebels (LÚ^{mes} ša-ru-ta) from the land of the king, my lord.

For the restoration of the text, see Na'aman 1998: 52 no. 8. The reconstruction of lines 14–15 (“May the [king] permi[t me] to wage w[ar]”) is based on EA 280:9–11: “The king my lord permitted me to wage war against Qiltu.” Shuwardata uses the pejorative term “rebels” (*amēlūti šarūti*) in the same way that other rulers use the term ‘Apiru. The identity of these “rebels” is not disclosed in the letter.

Letter EA 287 of ‘Abdi-Ḫeba, king of Jerusalem, describes in greater detail the “rebellion” at Qiltu. Unfortunately, the text is partly broken and its restoration uncertain. Here is a tentative translation of the relevant part of the letter (for restorations of the text, see Albright 1969: 488; Moran 1992: 328–29; Liverani 1998: 91–92; Rainey 1995–96: 119a):

EA 287:4–19: [Behold a]ll the things [that they did² to me². Rebels² (LÚ^{mes}? ar²-ni²)]¹¹ they bro[ught] against me into [Qiltu for rebelli]on² ([a-na nu-KÚR]^{mes}). [This² is²] the deed that they have d[one²] (ša² e²-[pu²-šu²]): [bows and] arrow(s) [they rebels²] they brought into [Qilt]u. May the king know. All the lands are at peace, but I am at war. And may the king exercise power over his land. Behold, Gezer, Ashkelon and L[achis]h have given them (the rebels) food, oil, and any other requirement. So may the king exercise power over the archers and send the archers against the men that rebelled (*ip-pu-šu ar-na*) against the king, my lord.

‘Abdi-Ḫeba describes a situation in which rebels and weapons were brought to Qiltu. He accuses the three major city-states of south Canaan (Gezer, Ashkelon, and Lachish) of provisioning the rebels. In lines 29–31 he accuses Milki-Ilu and Lab’ayu’s sons of instigating the rebellion: “Behold, this deed: it is the deed of Milki-Ilu and the deed of the sons of Lab’ayu, who have given the land of the king <to> the ‘Apiru.”

A third letter, written by Shuwardata (EA 366), also refers to this event. Here is a translation (Albright 1969: 487; Rainey 1978: 32–35; Moran 1992: 364):

11. For the restoration of lines 4–5, see lines 18b–19 “the men that rebelled (*ip-pu-šu ar-na*) against the king”; see also EA 335:12. For *arnu* in the sense of “rebel” in the Amarna letters, see Moran 1992: 243–244 n. 3; 307 n. 1.

EA 366:11–27: May the king, my lord, be informed that the ‘Apiru (¹²SA.GAZ) who rose up against the lands, the god of the king, my lord, gave to me, and I smote him. And may the king, my lord, be informed that all my brothers have abandoned me. Only ‘Abdi-Ḥeba and I have been at war with the ‘Apiru. Surata, the ruler of Acco, and Endaruta, the ruler of Achshaph, (these) two also have hastened to my aid with 50 chariots, and now they are on my side in the war.

There is a perfect accord between ‘Abdi-Ḥeba's accusations that Milki-Ilū and Labʾayu stand behind the "rebellion" and that Gezer, Ashkelon, and Lachish supported the rebels, and Shuwardata's statement that all his "brothers," i.e., kings of equal rank, had abandoned him, and only ‘Abdi-Ḥeba supported him in his war with the ‘Apiru. He further adds that the two most important rulers in the Acco plain came to his aid with 50 chariots. The mobilization of the two rulers was probably instigated by the Egyptian authorities, as indicated by EA 280:9–15: "The king, my lord, permitted me to wage war against Qiltu. I waged war. It is now at peace with me; my city is restored to me." The importance of chariots in the struggle with bands of ‘Apiru is explicitly mentioned in two letters of Mayarzana, ruler of Ḥasi (EA 185:50–59; 186:52–63). Mayarzana reports that a group of 40 ‘Apiru found shelter in Tushulti, a city-state located in the Beqaʿ of Lebanon, and that he mobilized chariots to block the city and demanded the band's expulsion.¹² The suppression of the strong band that found shelter in Qiltu also required the mobilization of armed forces and chariots. The combined forces of four city-states were able to crush the band and put an end to its operations.

The threat of the band also explains the stationing of an Egyptian guard, which included Nubian (Cushite) soldiers and numbered about 50 men, in Jerusalem (EA 285:9–11, 22–25; 286:25–33; 287:32–52, 71–78). This is another indication of how serious the situation was at that time, and how the Egyptian authorities in Canaan operated to curtail the danger.

The letters of Bēlit-labiʾat (EA 273–74) also belongs in this context. The distance between Qiltu and Ayyaluna (biblical Aijalon) and Ṣarḥa (biblical Zorah), the two places mentioned in letter EA 273, is about 20 km. The letters were written in the time of Milki-Ilū, and may be dated to the time of the Qiltu affair.

The structure of the two letters is identical: (a) an introduction; (b) a general statement on the destruction of the land of the pharaoh by the ‘Apiru (EA 273:8–15a; 274:10–14); (c) a description of a particular event that occurred, which illustrated the former general statement (EA 273:15b–24; 274:15–16); (d) a concluding remark (EA 273:25–26; 274:17–18). Letter EA 273 relates a raid of the ‘Apiru on Ayyaluna and Ṣarḥa, in which the two sons of Milki-Ilū barely escaped being killed. EA 274 mentions the plunder of the city of Ṣab/puma. Lines 10–16 may be translated as follows: "May the king, my lord, save his land from the ‘Apiru. Let it not perish. The city of Ṣab/puma is pillaged (*la-qí-ta-(at)*)."¹³ It is evident that Ṣab/puma was

12. EA 186:52–57: "We heard that the 40 ‘Apiru were with Amanhatpe, the ruler of Tushulti, and my brothers and my son . . . drove their chariots and entered the presence of Amanhatpe, the ruler of Tushulti." See also EA 185:50–54.

13. For the verbal form *la-qí-ta*, see EA 284:7 and CAD L 101a.

either a town in the territory of Gezer, or a secondary town in the territory of Bēlit-labiʾat's, but not her seat.¹⁴

The raids on Ayyaluna, Šarḥa, and Šab/puma should be attributed to the band of ʿApiru that seized Qiltu and used it as a base of operation for pillaging neighboring districts, similar to the band of ʿApiru that found shelter in Tushulti and raided the neighboring villages of the Beqaʿ (EA 185–86).

In sum, it seems that a strong band of ʿApiru found shelter in Qiltu under the patronage of the local authorities ("the men of Qiltu"; see EA 280:18; 289:28) and raided the neighboring areas (compare 1 Sam 23:1–13; for discussion of the biblical episode, see Naʿaman 2010). Some city-state rulers either cooperated with the band or refused to participate in the struggle. Qiltu was a border town of Gath and the band threatened its safety, as well as that of other neighboring districts. With the support of the Egyptian authorities, Shuwardata was able to organize a strong task-force of several city-states, crushed the band, and drove it out of Qiltu.

Following the successful campaign, Qiltu was restored to Shuwardata's rule (EA 280:8–15). However, peace did not last long. ʿAbdi-Ḥeba, who was involved in the struggle against the ʿApiru, took advantage of the situation and tried to gain a foothold in the Shephelah by turning Qiltu to his side (EA 280:16–36). In response, Shuwardata broke off his alliance with him and joined his adversaries, the rulers of Gezer, Shechem, and Ginti-kirmil. The Shechem–Gezer alliance was much stronger than Jerusalem, and it did not take them long to bring Qiltu back to Shuwardata's reign (EA 289:25–28; 290:10, 18). Qiltu was restored to its legitimate owner and the crisis which had begun with its seizure by the band of ʿApiru was finally over.

Rebellions in the Shephelah in the Late Amarna Period

The late stage of the Amarna archive was a period of rebellions and disturbances in southern Canaan. Several city-state rulers complained bitterly about serious difficulties in their kingdoms, and requested the pharaoh to hasten forces to rescue them (Naʿaman 1979: 676–82). Many of these letters call the offenders ʿApiru, but it is difficult to determine the role of bands in these events, because on many occasions the term ʿApiru exceeded its original connotation (i.e., a band of uprooted people), and became an epithet for all real, ostensible, or fabricated forces operating against the interests of the Egyptian authorities and the local Canaanite rulers. This bias on the part of the Canaanite scribes must be taken into account when dealing with the Amarna letters.

Let me discuss some of these letters in order to establish the identity of the social groups that operated in the related events.

Paʿapu, the writer of Letter EA 333, reports to the Egyptian magnate about a planned rebellion instigated by Shipti-Baʿlu in collaboration with Zimredda. Here

14. Zadok (1986: 180) suggested that Šab/puma may be the same as Sappho of Josephus (*Antiquities* 17:10:9–290; *Wars* 2:5:1–70), identified at the village of Šaffa (G.R. 155 146), in the foothills near Gezer's eastern border. He acknowledged the lack of Late Bronze remains at the site and suggested that "perhaps it is to be sought in a nearby site." The relatively large multi-period mound of el-Burj (Ḥorvat Tittora), located only three km east of Šaffa, may fit this identification. See also Vita 2005.

is a translation of his letter (Albright 1942; Rainey 1989–90: 72; 2006: 86; Moran 1992: 356–57; Horowitz and Oshima 2006: 92–94, with earlier literature):

EA 333:4–26: May you know that Shipti-Baʿlu and Zimredda are conspiring together, and Shipti-Baʿlu said to Zimredda: “The ‘father’ (i.e., sheikh) of Yarami indeed has sent to me;¹⁵ (so) give me [2ʹ]+2 bows, 3 daggers and 3 swords. Verily, I am about to go forth against the land of the king, and you will be in league with me.” But now he (Shipti-Baʿlu) responds (saying): “That is a plot! The one who is conspiring against the king is Paʿapu, so send him before me.” [No]w I am sending Rab/pi-Ilu. [Let] (him) bring him ([lu-iʿl] *yu-bal-šu*) [because of] this matter.

Paʿapu, who bears an Egyptian name (Albright 1942: 36 n. 27; Hess 1993: 122–23), was probably an Egyptian official of low rank corresponding with his superior, the magnate. Shipti-Baʿlu (location unknown) and Zimredda (ruler of Lachish) were city-state rulers in the Shephelah. The location of Yarami is unknown. The sequence of events as reflected in the letter may be reconstructed as follows:

(1) Shipti-Baʿlu reported to Zimredda that the “father” (i.e., sheikh) of Yarami sent him a message, probably to approve his participation in the planned rebellion, and requested a supply of weapons, possibly for an armed unit of ten men (4ʹ bows, 3 daggers and 3 swords). He called on Zimredda to join him in the rebellion.

(2) Rumors of the conspiracy reached Paʿapu, who must have sent the news to the magnate, his superior. In response, Shipti-Baʿlu accused Paʿapu of conspiring against the Egyptian government (see line 19 “But now he responds”).

(3) Paʿapu sent letter EA 333 in response to the charge made by Shipti-Baʿlu. He accused the latter of conspiring against the pharaoh, and sent his messenger (Rab/pi-Ilu) with the tablet to the magnate at Tell el-Ḥesi, requesting that Shipti-Baʿlu appear before the magnate and answer the charge of “lèse-majesté.”

We have already mentioned ʿAbdi-Ḥeba's accusation about the supply of weapons to the band in Qiltu (EA 287:6–7). Bands of ʿApiru and rural and nomadic groups were the major source of disorder and rebellions in the Late Bronze II. Providing them with weapons might have endangered the city-state rulers and the Egyptian authorities in Canaan, was considered an act of hostility, and efforts were made to block it. The biblical history of Saul relates an embargo on the supply of metals to highlands tribal groups (1 Sam 13:19–22). Also Sargon II accused Bel-(l)iqbi, the governor of Šubat, of violating his order not to sell iron to the Arabs (Parpola 1987: 140–41 No. 179; Fales 2002: 149–50). However, enforcing the prohibition in Canaan, a land divided among many political entities, each with its own interests, was almost impossible, as there was always someone who was willing to bypass the prohibition and sell weapons, thereby promoting his own interests.

Letter EA 333 probably reflects the first stage in the rebellion that later spread over the entire Shephelah. A series of letters sent to the pharaoh by south Canaanite rulers report rebellions and disturbances all over the region (for details, see Naʿaman 1979: 676–82).

15. The verbal *šapāru* is usually rendered “write.” However, it is unlikely that a sheikh of a village addressed the Canaanite ruler in writing. Similarly, the verbal form *šaparu* in EA 273:18 should be translated “sent” rather than “wrote.” For further examples, see Naʿaman 2000: 127–28, 252 n. 6.

Following is a translation of two letters, one from Jerusalem (EA 288), the second from Gath (EA 335), which give some concrete details of the events (Albright 1969: 488–489; Na'aman 1979: 677–78; Moran 1992: 331–32, 357–58; Rainey 2006: 86).

EA 288:34–47: The strong arm of the king seized the land of Naḥrima and the land of Cush; but now the 'Apiru are seizing the cities of the king. Not a single governor remains to the king, my lord; all are lost. Behold, Turbazu was slain in the gate of Zilû (but) the king kept silent. Behold, Zimredda (of) Lachish, servants who had become 'Apiru smote him (*ik-kí-ú-šu*). Yaptiḥ-Hadda was slain at the city gate of Zilû (but) the king kept silent. Why has he not called them to account?

EA 335:8–19: [May the king], my lord, [be informed that] I am [all alo]ne. May [the ki]ng, my lord, be informed] that [. . . me]n⁷ and Tur[bazu and] Yaptiḥ-Hadda have been slain and [the ruler of L]achish has been smi[tted] (*û nu-k[i]ʔ LÚ^{uru}L[a-ki-ši]*).¹⁶ May the king, my lord, be in[formed] that the rebels have t[aken] all my best men and women. May the king, my lord, be informed that the city of Lachish is hostile and the city of Muʾrashti is seized and [the city of x-x]shiki is [host]ile.

Who are the groups that are responsible for slaying the three rulers? 'Abdi-Ḥeba states explicitly that Zimredda was killed by “servants”—namely, his subjects, who by the very act of rebellion became outlaws ('Apiru). The identity of those who killed Turbazu and Yaptiḥ-Hadda remains unknown.

Other mayors complained bitterly about revolts and disturbances in their kingdoms. The late letters of Shuwardata (EA 281–84) describe in detail a state of rebellion in his kingdom. In letter EA 281 he describes his situation as follows (Moran 1992: 322; Liverani 1998: 83 and n. 67): “May the king, my lord, [be informed] that [no]w⁷ my cities are hostile to me. And may the king, my lord, send archers and make their [cities⁷] like a wilderness/willow tree⁷ (*GIŠ ḥa-ra-bu-yA*),¹⁷ and may the king capture them. The soldiers⁷ (*LÚ^{meš} ri-di-ʾu_s*)¹⁸ you will guard and these [dogs] may writhe⁷ before the king, my lord” (lines 8–19). A second description of the situation appears in EA 283:18–27: “May the king, my lord, be informed that 30 towns have waged war against me. I am alone! The war against me is severe.” In each of his four letters (EA 281:11–15, 27–29; 282:10–14; 283:25–27; 284:16–20) Shuwardata asks the pharaoh to send an Egyptian task force to crush the rebellion and rescue him. A similar picture arises from Milki-Ilu's latest letter (EA 271:9–21): “May the king, my lord, be informed that the war against me and against Shuwardata is severe. So may the king, my lord, save his land from the power of the 'Apiru. Otherwise, may the king, my lord, send chariots to fetch us lest our servants kill us.” The reference to “our servants,” namely, the subjects of the two allied rulers (see EA 288:44), shows that the rebellion was internal, started by the local rural and nomadic groups, and encompassed mainly the rural districts of the kingdoms.

16. The suggested restoration of the West Semitic verb *nkh* (*nu-k[i]*) rests on the parallel passage in EA 288:44 (*ik-kí-ú-šu*) and the verbal form *nu-di-ni* in EA 283:23 (Moran 1992: 324 n. 6). The verb *nkh* in the sense of “smite fatally” is well known in biblical historiography, particularly in texts that refer to the slain of the kings of Israel and Judah.

17. For the transcription, see Na'aman 1998: 52–53 no. 9. Tentatively (and with a big question mark) I suggest interpreting *ḥa-ra-bu-yA* as the Canaanite word *ʿarābāh*, “wilderness” or “willow.”

18. For rendering the *ḥu* sign as *ʾu_s*, see EA 284:19 *qa-ti-ʾu_s*, “his hand.”

Only the rulers of Gezer accused the 'Apiru of participation in the rebellions (EA 271:9–21; 272:10–17; 298:20–27; 299:17–26). In one of these letters (EA 298:20–27), Yapaḥu informs the king that “my younger brother, having become enemy, entered Muḥḥazu and pledged himself to the 'Apiru.” I have suggested (Na'aman 1997: 612–13) that Beya, the son of Gulatu, whose misdeeds were the subject of the bitter complaints by two neighboring rulers (EA 292:41–52; 294:16–26), was the leader of a band of 'Apiru that stayed at Muḥḥazu. If this is indeed the case, this band was responsible for the raids in the neighboring kingdoms of Gezer and Tianna.¹⁹

A clear indication of the gravity of these events is that during these years all the leading rulers in south Canaan were replaced (Na'aman 1979: 681). Milki-Ilu of Gezer was replaced by Yapaḥu, whose letters reflect the same internal difficulties and who was soon replaced by Ba'lu-dānu. Zimredda of Lachish was replaced by Shipti-Ba'lu, who was later replaced by Yabni-ilu. Shuwardata of Gath was replaced by 'Abdi-Ashtarti, and Shubandu of Ashkelon was replaced by Yidya.

We may conclude that widespread rebellions in the rural districts of the Shephelah broke out in the late stage of the Amarna archive. Groups of rural inhabitants must have participated in the rebellions which threatened the thrones of the local rulers. Some mayors were killed and others were soon replaced, their fate remaining unknown. The background of the rebellions and how long they continued are unknown, but they stopped when news spread about a planned Egyptian campaign to Canaan, and the fear of the arriving Egyptian troops pacified the area (see Na'aman 1990).

Concluding Remarks

There is a marked contrast between the Egyptian inscriptions, which entirely ignore the Shephelah region (except for Gezer) and mention only toponyms located outside its area, and the Amarna letters, which show that the Shephelah played an important part in the Egyptian administration of Canaan. The many letters sent to the pharaoh by the Shephelah rulers, the frequent visits of Egyptian officials to their centers and those of the local rulers in the Egyptian center of Gaza (for the latter see Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 322–24), the tributes and gifts sent to the pharaoh, and finally the Egyptian involvement in the suppression of the rebellions—all these indicate the importance of the Shephelah to the Egyptian authorities in Canaan.

The letters reveal the weakness of the Shephelah rulers and their vulnerability to operations of the non-urban social elements. Only a coalition of city-states organized by the Egyptian authorities was able to overcome the threat of a single band of 'Apiru. Moreover, rulers of the major city-states (Gezer, Gath, and Lachish) were unable to suppress rebellions that broke out in their territories, which soon spread all over the district and led to the death of rulers and the replacement of all the major city-state rulers in this area. Only the preparation for an Egyptian campaign to Canaan and the threat of direct Egyptian intervention in the local affairs brought

19. Rainey (2003: 193*–94*) dismissed the reading Tianna in letters EA 284 and 298 and suggests that this is a “ghost town.”

about the pacification of the region. The city-states of the Shephelah were sparsely populated, and the rulers had small military forces. The large number of city-states in the district further weakened the local rulers and required them to form coalitions in an effort to gain strength. It is not always clear whether the city-state rulers effectively governed the outlying lands in their territories, and the Qiltu affair is a good example of the control issue. This explains the alliance initiated by Milki-Ilu with his strong northern neighbors, as well as the formation of an ad-hoc coalition in order to crush the band of 'Apiru. The weakness of the local rulers explains the power of the bands of 'Apiru and of the rural and nomadic groups *vis-à-vis* the power of the urban centers.

The archaeological excavations and surveys supply important data that is not illuminated by the documentary evidence. They show that, compared to the Middle Bronze Age II–III, the Late Bronze Age I–II was a time of crisis and sharp decline in the population and the urban and material culture. The main cities were unwalled, scantily inhabited, contained few and unimpressive public buildings and poor private houses, and many rural areas were sparsely populated. The study of the correspondence alone does not provide a true picture of conditions in the country, and a proper evaluation of the letters can be made only when combined with the archaeological evidence.

Finally, the omission of the towns of the Shephelah from the Egyptian topographical lists of the time of the Eighteenth–Nineteenth Dynasties must be reconsidered. As clarified above, control of the Shephelah and its economic exploitation was essential for the Egyptian authorities in Canaan. Thus it is evident that the inclusion of cities in the Egyptian topographical lists was guided by other considerations. The Shephelah was in south Canaan, far away from the districts against which the Egyptians directed their military campaigns. Pacifying the area by suppressing the unstable elements operating there and supporting the local mayors was not as prestigious a task as the campaigns northwards against the strong enemies of Egypt. For this reason, even a central city like Ashkelon, located near the outlet of the main road northward, was mentioned in few topographical lists (see Ahituv 1984: 69–70). The topographical lists were engraved on walls of public buildings for prestige and propaganda purposes. Securing the stability of the Shephelah rulers did not entail sufficient prestige, and so its cities were not included in the inscriptions.

The unstable state of affairs in the Shephelah in the Amarna period must have continued in the late years of the Eighteenth Dynasty. The shift in its history took place under the Nineteenth Dynasty, and particularly under the Twentieth Dynasty, when the Egyptians intervened directly in the affairs of the local rulers and gradually incorporated the district in their domain. However, the problems associated with this new phase are beyond the scope of the present article.

I have known the honorable jubileer for nearly forty years, first as a colleague and then as a friend. Our long friendship was preserved, despite some scientific disputes, in particular when I refused to treat him as a technician and held strongly to my conviction—in spite of his loud protests—that he is a genuine biblical archae-

ologist. It gives me great pleasure to write an article in his honor on an issue connected to his first archaeological love, the Shephelah and Tel Lachish at its center.

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Reconsidering the Buildings in Area A at Edomite Buseirah

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The site of Buseirah (biblical Bozrah) was extensively excavated in the 1970s by Crystal M. Bennett, who published several preliminary reports (Bennett 1973; 1974; 1975; 1977) and articles (Bennett 1978; 1983; 1986) on the results. A few years ago Piotr Bienkowski, who is in charge of Bennett's archaeological legacy, published the final excavation report (2002).

In an article published in 2001, and in the final report, Bienkowski suggested a new framework for understanding the stratigraphy, architectural history, and chronology of Buseirah. Several of his conclusions differ considerably from those that Bennett published in her preliminary reports. This article presents a brief examination and re-evaluation of Bienkowski's new conclusions.

Bennett identified two buildings in Area A at Buseirah, one constructed on top of the other: the lower Building B (Bennett 1977: Fig. 2), with an elongated rectangular outline (38×76.5 m), and the upper Building A (Bennett 1977: Fig. 3), of considerably smaller dimensions (36×48 m), constructed over the ruins of the southern part of Building B. The western, southern, and eastern walls of Building A are aligned with the corresponding walls of Building B. Bennett's understanding of the architecture and relative chronology was accepted by other researchers (Reich 1992: 219–20; Stern 2001: 29, 32). Bienkowski has presented a new phasing of the architectural remains in Area A, identifying five separate phases (2001: 202–5; 2002: 57–109, 475–78). I wish to offer the following comments on these phases:

The lowest Phase 1 is comprised of scant remains on bedrock that pre-date the main building activity in this part of the site, and therefore is not pertinent to this essay. Similarly, Phase 5 is represented by the remains of architecture constructed on the ruins of the main building phase, and is also excluded from the present discussion.

Bienkowski attributes to Phase 2 the series of stone walls and associated earthen fills that created a stone and earth platform, on top of which was constructed the large building he assigned to Phase 3. Since this is indeed the case, these two elements—the platform and the building constructed on top of it—cannot be separated into two different occupational phases. They represent two technical phases of a single architectural and occupational activity. This technique is typical of the Neo-Assyrian method of constructing a *tamlu*, that is, an artificial platform designed to elevate a palace or temple several meters above its surroundings. This architectural feature was probably introduced into the region as a result of the

Assyrian or Babylonian influence over Edom. A similar construction technique is evident in Assyrian Residencies 1369, 490, and the somewhat later Building 1052 at Megiddo, Strata III–II (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 70–77, Figs. 81, 89, Section A–B), and the Assyrian fort at Tell Abu Salima (Petrie and Ellis 1937: 6–7, Pls. II:7, X, XI, XXXI).

The most questionable conclusion presented by Bienkowski, which differs considerably from Bennett's architectural interpretation of the site, pertains to his Phases 3 and 4 (Bienkowski 2001: 202–4, Figs. 3–4,¹ 2002: 66–91; Figs. 4.5, 4.7). Bienkowski suggested that Bennett's two separate buildings (The Upper Building A and the Lower Building B) were actually one building with two occupational phases: the original building, including most of the walls of Bennett's lower and upper buildings (his Phase 3) and a later reuse of this combined building, represented by a few minor constructional additions and the raising of floors (his Phase 4).

Bennett excavated considerable parts of the upper Building A. She especially pointed out the four external corners of that building, of which she had uncovered three—the northwestern, northeastern, and southwestern corners (Bennett 1977: Fig. 1A)—and their method of construction (Fig. 1). The edges of the walls curve slightly outwards at the corners, giving them a peculiar shape that Bennett called “wings” (1977: 1–3).

Regarding the southern “wings,” Bienkowski writes (2001: 203):

Two of the new major walls [those rebuilt in Phase 4—my addition, RR] had a concave construction, producing a “winged” effect and giving the southwestern wing the appearance of a separate building, further evidence that perhaps the two wings of the building functioned as separate activity areas. With a few minor changes, the plan seems to have remained the same as in Phase 3 (*contra* Bennett, who reconstructed the Phase 4 building [her Building A] on a different, smaller plan than that of Phase 3 [her Building B]). (Bienkowski 2001: 203)

A close examination of the plans, photos, and the remains on the site clearly shows that in addition to the “wings” at the southwestern and southeastern corners of the upper building, there are “wings” at its northwestern and northeastern corners as well. These were fully excavated by Bennett, but Bienkowski does not relate to them.

The peculiar shape of the corners is a result of thickening in order to strengthen these vulnerable parts of the building. While the western, southern, and eastern walls of Building A are aligned with the corresponding walls of the lower building, their corner “wings” extend slightly outwards. This deviation is particularly obvious in the northeastern “wing.” That these features are the corners of Building A is also supported by the use of larger stones to strengthen these parts of the building.

The implication is that this is not an earlier building that was simply rebuilt, with some floors raised, but that it is a later building constructed over the ruins of

1. Note that on the plans published by Bienkowski (2001, Figs. 3 and 4), the courtyards are erroneously named SW Courtyard and NE Courtyard; the north sign marked on the right hand side of the metric scale shows that these titles should be switched. In the final report (Bienkowski 2002), this discrepancy continued in the captions to the sections. For example, in Fig. 4.26, Section A.16 is said to be “north-west facing,” while in fact it is facing southeast.

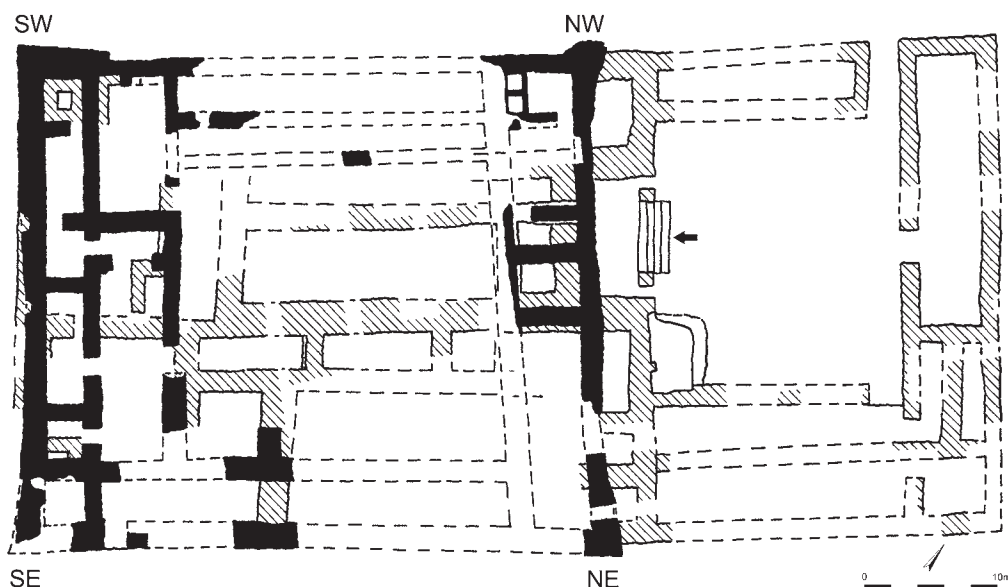


Fig. 1. Buseirah Area A: black—Building A; hatched—Building B (redrawn from Bienkowski 2002: Figs. 4.5, 4.6).

the earlier structure, with the outer walls aligned with those of the earlier building, except at the corners, which deviate from the line of the earlier building due to their “winged” construction. Since the later building was considerably shorter than the earlier, it overlapped only part of it, namely, the southern part.

Among the cross-sections published from Area A, seven (A10–A16) relate to the southern half of the excavation area, for which Bennett claimed to have exposed two buildings, one on top of the other. Unfortunately, absolute levels are indicated neither on the plans (Figs. 4.1, 4.2) nor on the sections, and this prevents a comprehensive stratigraphic comparison. However, some observations can be made, which show that remains of an upper construction clearly differs from a lower construction.

Section A14 shows Wall 86 on its left side, which rises to a height of 5 m. The profile of the wall is not straight but indented outwards with height. There are three wall segments constructed one on top of the other: the lowest segment is 2.4 m high; the median, center segment is 1.3 m high with floor 21.2.9 abutting it; and the upper segment is 1.3 m high, with floor 21.2.5 abutting it. It seems that the bottom segment is part of a retaining wall of the podium. The median wall is part of Building B for which the podium was constructed. The upper segment and its floor belong to Building A.

Sections of two adjacent earthen baulks are shown in Section A15. In the upper part are seen walls (Nos. 33, 52) of the upper building (Building A). It seems that “hard surface 25.4.7” is its floor. Under it are Walls 51 and 59 that belong to Building B. Wall 50 seems to predate these. Section A10 also points to the fact that Wall

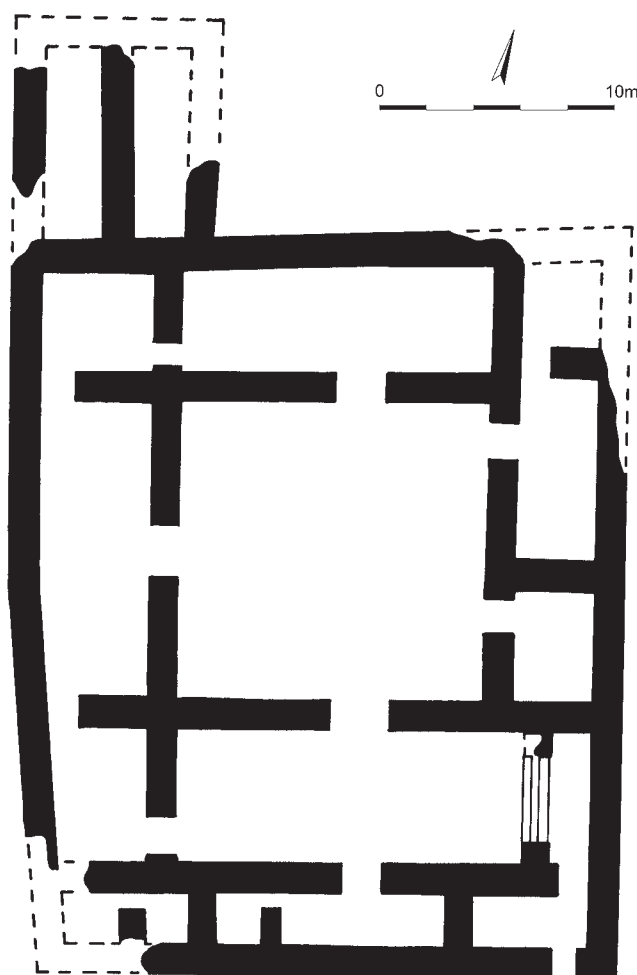


Fig. 2. Hazor Building 3002
(redrawn from Yadin et al.
1958: Pl. XIII).

50 predates the walls of the lower building, since Floor 8.5.9, which abuts Walls 59 and 60 of the lower building, clearly runs over it. Wall 50 could also have belonged to the retaining walls that create the above-mentioned podium.

Section A16 is the only one that relates both to the southern part of the site, where Bennett identified the two buildings (A and B) superimposed one on the other, on the one hand, and the northern part of the site, where only the vestiges of the lower building (B) are extant. The section shows on the right hand side Wall 33, which is the northern outer wall of Building A, and on the left side Wall 44 of the lower building. Two floors which abut the lower building (26.1.8 and 26.1.18) are cut by the foundation trench (Loci 26.1.9, 26.1.20) of the upper building.

Despite the schematic nature of the sections and the lack of levels, which prevents the comparison between the various sections, there seems to be ample stratigraphic

evidence for the existence of two distinct strata, rather than a single stratum (Bienkowski's Phase 3) with some changes and modifications (Bienkowski's Phase 4).

The merging of Bennett's two superimposed buildings into one as suggested by Bienkowski makes the outer northeastern wall of Building A (Wall 33), between "wings" NW and NE (Fig. 1), an internal wall, running across the building from one side to the other. The result is that the proposed single building is divided into two parts separated by this wall. Bienkowski says that "there was no direct access between the two courtyards, and it is possible that the two parts of the building functioned separately" (2001a: 203; 2002: Fig. 4.5).

This seems to be a unique architectural phenomenon, and if the wall had no other elements associated with it, we would be forced to accept its extremely illogical and unprecedented architectural plan. But if the other walls that connect these "wing" constructions (between "wings" SW and NW; SW and SE; and SE and NE) are interpreted as external walls of the "merged" building, then the wall connecting the corners of "wings" NW and NE must surely be an outer wall as well, not an interior wall within the building.

An architectural parallel for Bennett's Building A may support her interpretation of the existence of two buildings in Area A at Buseirah. If we take the plan of the walls between the "wings" or corners as a separate unit, then Stratum III Building 3002 in Area B at Hazor seems to be a close architectural parallel (Yadin et al. 1958: 45–54, Pl. XIII, CLXXVII). Especially noteworthy in this comparison are some features related to the largest room (Fig. 1:1) in both buildings, which seem to have served as a main audience room:

- They are located directly south of the main courtyard.
- There is a smaller, narrower room located in the rear of this large room (Fig. 1: 2).
- The entranceways from the courtyard into the main room and from it to the rear room are located along the same line.
- The main room has an additional relatively wide entranceway, located on one of the shorter sides, which leads into a small room (Fig. 1:3).

Hazor Building 3002 and Buseirah Building A seem to be contemporaneous, dating to the 6th or 5th century B.C.E.² In both places they replaced large public buildings of the late 8th or 7th century B.C.E. The difference between the sites is that at Buseirah the later building was constructed on top of the ruins of the earlier, while at Hazor they were constructed about a kilometer apart, with the earlier building located at Ayelet ha-Shahar (Reich 1975).

In the light of the discussion and the parallel presented above, it appears that Bienkowski's suggestion should be abandoned in favor of Bennett's original interpretation.

2. Yadin (1972: 194) attributed Building 3002 at Hazor to the Assyrian occupation of the site but enabled a later date, saying "no objects of the original citadel were found on the floors, and therefore it is difficult to date the building accurately. . . . it was built between c. 700 (the date of Stratum IV) and 400 (the date of Stratum II), with the probabilities nearly even between the seventh and sixth centuries. In other words it may have been built either by the Assyrian or the Babylonian forces."

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The Persian Period City Wall of Jerusalem

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The province of Judah and the city of Jerusalem in the Persian period are currently the focus of strong debates (see, for instance, Carter 1999; Edelman 2005; Lipschits 2005; Lipschits and Oeming 2006; Finkelstein 2008). Although extensively excavated, Jerusalem has not yielded much Persian material, apart from some seal impressions and coins and pottery sherds. This may be due to the large building operations of later periods, which may have destroyed the Persian period layers in many areas. Or—equally possible—as Jerusalem was very sparsely populated at that time, there are simply not many remains from the Persian period.

Research has generally centered on the questions of when and why Jerusalem was repopulated and the size of the city. Ussishkin recently published a paper in which he argues that the returnees merely rebuilt the Iron Age city walls, and that therefore Jerusalem was a very large but sparsely populated town during the Persian period. He maintains that it spanned ca. 60 ha, but had large open areas devoid of population, and it is this that accounts for the paucity of Persian period material unearthed in excavations (Ussishkin 2006). Most other scholars, myself included, maintain that Jerusalem was much smaller and that only the southeastern hill, or City of David, was occupied during this period.

Kathleen Kenyon claimed to have identified a Persian-period city wall on the eastern side of the City of David (Fig. 1). Kenyon described this wall as “a substantial wall following the crest of the rock scarp. . . . It was solidly built, ca. 2.75 m. thick, but its finish was rough” (1967: 111). Persian pottery was found in front (outside) of the wall. This pottery has recently been published by Franken (2005). In this paper, I wish to argue that this wall should in fact be dated later than the Persian period. If I am correct, we have lost the only piece of fortification dated to the Persian period.

Kenyon’s Persian Period City Wall

This wall was originally uncovered by Macalister and Duncan in their 1923–25 excavations (1926). It is located on top of the eastern slope of the City of David, north of the Stepped Stone Structure, and was built against a small tower. Kenyon laid out her square A/XVIII in front of this wall and excavated Persian material in the debris layers there (Fig. 2). She described the wall as follows: “To the north of the Jebusite ramp is a smaller tower built against a wall of roughly trimmed masonry founded on the summit of a rock scarp. . . . This wall is the earliest on the



Fig. 1. The Persian period city wall identified by Kenyon (photo courtesy of the Council for British Research in the Levant).

crest of the east slope. . . . There was a series of midden tip-lines *lapping up against the foot of the wall* on top of the scarp, material that must have been tipped over the wall" (Kenyon 1974: 183). Kenyon also published a photograph of Square A/XVIII (1974: Fig. 79). In the caption to this photo she described a "fill . . . that lapped up against the wall." The photo shows that small walls were incorporated in the fill levels to stabilize the fill (Fig. 2). Kenyon provisionally dated the pottery found in front of the wall to the 5th–3rd centuries B.C.E. (1974: 183). Kenyon thus believed that the inhabitants had thrown their refuse over the wall, and these midden tips accumulated against the foot of the fortification. This would securely date the use of the wall (and by default its construction, as there was no earlier wall here) to the Persian period.

Franken has analyzed the stratigraphy of Kenyon's Square A/XVIII and identified several deposits outside of the town wall (2005: 89–103). The lowest layer consisted of heavy stone collapse in which ashlar and a large proto-aeolic capital from the Iron Age were found. The stone collapse was covered by later debris on top of which the so-called "midden tips" were deposited. The pottery found in these



Fig. 2. Excavation of Square A/XVIII in front of the wall and tower. Below the wall the scarped bedrock is visible (photo courtesy of the Council for British Research in the Levant).



Fig. 3. Excavation of the Maccabean glacis put up against the tower during the 1923–1925 excavations (photo courtesy of the PEF).

layers mostly dates to the 6th–5th centuries B.C.E. (and is thus earlier than Kenyon assumed). No imported wares and no Hellenistic sherds were found. Hence, the sequence seems quite clear: a city wall was built on top of the scarp, and refuse containing Persian period material accumulated outside and against it. The dating of this wall to the Persian period seems secure. But is it?

Comparing the evidence from Square A/XVIII with the results of Macalister's and Shiloh's excavations created some doubt in my mind. Shiloh found a 3–4 m thick glacis against the Maccabean fortification in his Area G south of Square A/XVIII. This glacis was made of "layers of earth, chalky earth, gravel and cobbles, tipped over one another alternately" (1984: 20). Small walls were found in the glacis, intended to stabilize it. Macalister found this glacis as well, sloping up against the large Maccabean tower he excavated and against the smaller tower north of it (Fig. 3). It seemed strange to me that Kenyon had not found any trace of this glacis.

However, according to the photographs, Kenyon's Persian period "midden tips" are actually very similar to the glacis, as they both consist of layers of earth and gravel. Both the glacis and Kenyon's deposits lap up against the base of the fortification and small walls were built into both layers in order to stabilize them. Hence, one could argue that the "midden tips" and the glacis are one and the same. In other words, there is no reason to assume that Kenyon's wall was earlier than the

Maccabean fortification system. Kenyon's segment is part of the Maccabean fortification built on the crest of the slope in the 2nd century B.C.E. This hypothesis, however, creates a new problem. Shiloh stated that "the glacis contained much Hellenistic pottery" (1984: 21), while Kenyon's "midden tips" had no such pottery.

To resolve this problem I rechecked the photos and section drawings of Macalister's and Kenyon's excavations. The results were surprising. It turns out that Kenyon never excavated the glacis. When Kenyon laid out Square A/XVIII in 1962, she began to dig from the level where Macalister had stopped in 1925. Macalister had already exposed the face of the wall and had excavated the layers in front of it till he reached bedrock (see Fig. 1, the situation before the excavation of Square A/XVIII). So Kenyon laid out a trench in front of the wall, starting at the base of the wall. Then she started to dig down from the level of bedrock on which the wall was footed, that is: *below* the level of the "midden tips" (Fig. 4). The section drawings Franken published support this thesis. The highest levels Kenyon excavated in Square A/XVIII are at ca. 693 m, while the foot of the city wall was at 693.75 m.

This means that the "midden tips" consisted of the deposits *underneath* the gravely layers shown on the photograph in *Digging Up Jerusalem* (and Fig. 2), and these deposits did not lap up against the *base of the wall*, but against the *rock scarp*. Her Persian period pottery was found *below* the Maccabean glacis. We have all been deceived by the photograph. Actually, Kenyon herself was deceived by it; when she published the same photograph earlier, in her 1967 book, *Jerusalem: Excavating 3000 Years of History*, she wrote in the accompanying text "that midden rubbish [was] tipped over the wall, *accumulating against the scarp*" (1967: 111). The situation is now clear. The Persian-period layers were found *below* the base of the wall, while the Maccabean glacis runs up against it. The wall is Maccabean in date. Indeed, Franken concluded that the "midden tips" "do not point to a process of slow accumulation of refuse dumped over the top of the wall. . . . It probably was a planned operation in which older ruins and more recent dwellings were demolished in order to make space for a new layout, including the town wall" (2005: 92).¹

The Source of the Persian-Period Pottery in Kenyon's Excavation

But then, if the town wall is Maccabean, where does the Persian period pottery come from? How and why was it deposited there? I suggest two scenarios to account for this situation:

Scenario 1:

- In the Persian period a building stood on top of the crest.
- In the Maccabean period the area was cleared for the building of a new city wall.
- The building remains, together with the pottery, were dumped in front of the rock scarp.

1. Actually, the whole idea of people climbing to the top of the city wall in order to dump their refuse over it is quite unrealistic.



Fig. 4. Excavation of Square A/XVIII in front of the wall and tower. Kenyon excavated the deposits below the black line (photo courtesy of the Council for British Research in the Levant).

- A city wall plus glacis were built in the 2nd century B.C.E.
- A Persian period city wall never existed here.

The problem with this scenario is that the debris dumped in front of the rock scarp contained pottery solely from the 6th–5th centuries B.C.E. If the area had been occupied until the building of the Maccabean wall, why was there no pottery at all from the 4th–2nd centuries B.C.E.?

Scenario 2:

- In the early Persian period a building stood on top of the crest.
- In the 5th century B.C.E., the area was cleared for the building of a new town wall.
- The building remains and early Persian pottery were dumped in front of the rock scarp.
- In the Maccabean period the Persian-period wall was rebuilt and a glacis put up against it.
- A Persian-period city wall once existed here.

If I am right, then a Persian-period city wall was built along the same lines as the later, still visible Maccabean fortification. It is even possible that the walls we see are the Persian period walls, reused in the Maccabean period, but there is no evidence to support this theory.

Mazar's Persian-Period City Wall

Eilat Mazar recently announced that she found part of a Persian period city wall in the eastern sector of her excavation field. The small tower (Figs. 1–2) was about to collapse, and was excavated by her. Underneath the tower she found the skeletons of two dogs and pottery and seals dating to the Neo-Babylonian and early Persian periods (6th and 5th centuries B.C.E.) (Mazar 2009: 72–79). No later pottery was found there. As these finds were recovered not from a floor inside the tower but from deposits underneath the building, they can only give a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the tower, which thus may have been built from the 5th century B.C.E. onwards. This does not prove that the tower itself dates to the Persian period. These finds are in complete agreement with Kenyon's evidence. My Scenario 2 suggests that both the wall and the tower were (re)built in the Maccabean period along the lines of a Persian period city wall no longer visible.

The Size of Jerusalem in the Persian Period

In a recent paper, Ussishkin argues that the Persian period town was not restricted to the City of David but extended over the western hill (2006). As no actual fortifications from the Persian period have been found in Jerusalem, we can only make assumptions on the basis of the activities of the Maccabeans. Hellenistic period fortifications have been excavated both in the City of David and on the western hill, and late Hellenistic pottery and stamped jar handles have been found on the western hill, suggesting that during the Maccabean period the western hill was included in the city. When exactly this incorporation of the western hill into the city occurred is a matter of debate.

An important clue lies in the Maccabean fortifications around the City of David. Traces of these fortifications have been found not only on the eastern side of the hill. On the western side of the City of David Crowfoot and Hamilton excavated a very impressive structure, which they identified as a gate (1929: 12–13). Ussishkin argues that this gate was in fact a subterranean structure supporting a Maccabean or later building, which was located higher on the slope (2006). After carefully evaluating the evidence from Crowfoot's excavation and the results from Kenyon's site M, 75 m farther north, I beg to differ with Ussishkin.

Ussishkin argues that it would be very unlikely that a city wall was built at the bottom of the steep slope of the City of David. The fact that the walls of the so-called "gate" still stood over 6 m high would be an indication that they were buried immediately after their construction. Ussishkin dates the "subterranean" walls to the 1st century B.C.E. or the 1st century C.E. Yet, it seems to me unlikely that such an immense subterranean structure would have been erected only to facilitate the construction of a large building higher up the slope, at a time when large areas in the town must still have been empty. On the photographs a later wall that was added to the structure can be identified. This makes it quite unlikely that it was a subterranean structure (who would add a wall to a structure buried deep in the earth?). The discovery in the gate of a hoard of 319 coins from the time of Alexander Jannaeus strengthens this argument (Crowfoot and Fitzgerald 1929: 103–5).

Kenyon opened up her Area M some 75 m north of Crowfoot's excavations. On the slope she found houses dating to the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.E., running up to a large wall built on bedrock further west (1974: 195). She identified this wall as a Maccabean fortification—the continuation of Crowfoot's walls further south. If Kenyon's identification is correct (at the time of the writing of this article the final publication of Area M has still to appear), the Maccabeans took great care to defend the western slope of the City of David. However, if the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the Persian period had already enclosed the western hill in their fortifications, as Ussishkin suggests, why would the Maccabeans have to build strong walls on the western side of the City of David? What function would these walls have served? This only makes sense if the Maccabeans reinforced an existing fortification from the Persian period around the City of David, and only somewhat later built a new city wall to include the western hill.

To sum up, I would argue that in the Persian (and Early Hellenistic) periods Jerusalem was confined to the City of David. It was only in the Maccabean period that the city began to expand over the western hill.²

2. The excavations in the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem have not yielded any remains from the Persian and Early Hellenistic periods (Geva 2000–2006).

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Phoenician Clay Masks from Tel Dor

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This presentation which deals with cultic finds from Dor is dedicated to my old colleague and friend David Ussishkin, who has spent much time discussing the cultic customs of peoples in the land of Israel and beyond.

Clay masks were apparently an essential part of the popular cult in the Late Canaanite and Phoenician worlds (Cintas 1946; Culican 1975; 1986; Stern 1976; 1982; Ciasca 1988). Another expression of this folk cult is the glass and faience amulets in the form of small masks (which will not be dealt with here). Such finds are widespread at sites in Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Palestine and later in the western Phoenician colonies. In Palestine, they first appear in the Late Bronze Age at sites such as Hazor (Yadin 1958: 117, Pl. CLXIII; 1960: 108, Pl. CLXXXIII). Fragments are also known from Gezer (Macalister 1912: 233, Fig. 383), Beth Shean (Rowe 1940; Pl. LXIVA: 3–4) and Tell Abu Hawam (in the new excavations conducted by M. Artzy; Stern 2008: 1554). At Tell Qasile a pottery mask was uncovered in the Stratum XI temple of the 11th-century B.C.E. (Mazar, A. 1980: 84–85) and another mask comes from a 10th-century B.C.E. (Stratum VII) level at Tel Sera^c (unpublished). The masks continue into the later part of the Iron Age and especially—as in the case of Tel Dor—into the Persian period.

Masks dating to the late Iron Age and the Persian period have been found along the Phoenician coast at Beirut, Sidon, Khalde, Sarepta, and Tyre (Liban 1998: 115; Macridy 1903: Pl. VII: 4; Parrot, Chéhab and Moscati 1975: 100, Fig. 103; Pritchard 1975: 34, Figs 16: 5, 45: 3; 1988: 66–71, Fig 16; Bikai 1978: Pl. 24: 7; Badre 1997: 91, Fig. 47b). In Palestine, masks from the late Iron Age and the Persian period were discovered, aside from Dor, at Achzib, Tell Keisan, Megiddo, Tel Šippor, and Tell eš-Šāfi (Dayagi-Mendels 2002: 156–62; Mazar, E. 2004: 79, 82–83, Fig. 18, Photo 97; Briend and Humbert 1980: 347–48, Pl. 103:25–26; Negbi 1966, Pl. 8:47; Bliss 1899: 328; Avissar 2007). Additional items have recently been found in Judah—at Tel Sheba and Jerusalem (Kletter 2007). Others came from unknown sites and were acquired by the Israel Museum (Hestrin and Dayagi-Mendels 1980).

A large number of masks were uncovered in Cyprus (Karageorghis 1990; 1993; 1996) and in the Punic colonies in the west, where they became especially common

Author's note: All the masks discussed in this article were found in the excavations conducted between 1980 and 2000, which were directed by the author. The three figurines depicted in Fig. 2 and in Pl. 2 were found in the 2007 season which was directed by Ilan Sharon and Ayelet Gilboa. All photos are by Zeev Radovan, except those in Pl. 2, which were taken by Gabi Laron. The drawings were done by Vered Rozen and Sara Halbreich.

during the Phoenicians' westward expansion (Cintas 1946: 32–64). Most of the masks found in the west were uncovered in tombs together with other funerary paraphernalia (Ciasca 1988).

The clay masks are usually divided into two classes: (1) naturalistic heads probably representing gods or goddesses, whose foreheads bear various apotropaic symbols which appear both on masks and *protomai*, and (2) grotesque heads which were intended to ward off evil spirits. To the above should be added the masks depicting the figure of the god Silenus, who was apparently endowed with apotropaic qualities, and a group of animal masks, mostly representing bulls.

All these masks were first studied by Cintas (1946) who concentrated mainly on the scores of items of this type discovered in the Punic colonies in the western Mediterranean. Cintas classified the masks into five typological groups which exhibit the following characteristics:

1. A youthful beardless face with squashed nose, holes for the eyes, and a mouth drawn up on one side
2. An old but beardless face with heavy lines on the forehead and cheeks, crescent-shaped eye sockets, and a large hole for the mouth turned up high on both sides
3. Close to 2 (a variant), characterized by an oval crease surrounding the mouth, which is often unusually small
4. Isolated but very characteristic types—only male faces which are not grimacing; a suspension ring is fixed on the top of the head and the eyes are sculpted and not perforated
5. Bearded Silenus faces with pointed animal-like ears and small, almost round eye-holes

At Dor a rich assemblage of masks had been recovered, consisting of almost the entire range of types mentioned above.

The First Group: Grotesque Heads

This classification is also applicable to the masks discovered along the Phoenician and Palestinian coast, where (with the exception of Cintas's first group) examples can be found of each of these groups. We list them here following his order.

Of the masks of Groups 2 and 3 (the two are merely variations of one and the same grotesque type), an almost identical specimen was found by I. Ben-Dor in Achzib's southern cemetery (Dayagi-Mendels 2002: 158–59, Fig. 7.23). It has a nearly exact duplicate among the Punic masks (Stern 1976: 111, Fig. 3). Most of the mask fragments uncovered at Dor, including the intact example (Fig. 1:1–8), belong to the grotesque or grimacing type (Fig. 1:1–8; Pl. 1). Especially noteworthy is sherd No. 129430 from Locus 12916 with open mouth and bared teeth (Fig. 1:1), which closely resembles the group of skull-like death masks, also with bared teeth (Stern 2000: 175, Fig. 107–8, here Fig. 1:2; Parrot, Chéhab, and Moscati 1975: 172, Fig. 180; Moscati 1968: Pls. 75–76) discovered in the western Punic colonies at Carthage and Sardinia. The complete mask from Dor (Fig. 1:8; Pl. 1:1) also shows similar traits, not only in the usual grotesque smile but also in the projecting emblem in

the center of the forehead, which represents an apotropaic symbol that appears on almost all the masks from Cyprus (Karageorghis 1990; 1993; 1996) and in the west in general.

Another apotropaic symbol, in this case incised (Stern 2000: 175, Figs. 107–8) and having the form of a plant, can be observed on an additional mask fragment from Dor (Fig. 1:4; Pl. 1:3). Several other mask fragments, especially the one with an incised symbol on the forehead, and other fragments with distorted facial features, also belong to this group (Fig. 1:3–9; Pl. 1:2–3). They are comparable to the complete mask from Carthage (Fig. 1:5). Several smaller unidentified fragments may belong either to the grotesque type or to the heads of gods and goddesses (Fig. 3:3–10; Pl. 1:7–9 and see below).

The face of an old man marked with deep lines and a “grotesque” or “grimacing” mask was iconographically derived from the Mesopotamian masks of Pazuzu and Humbaba (Culican 1975: 67). They represent demonic figures and their essential function was apotropaic (Stern 1976: 117; Dayagi-Mendels 2002: 158–59).

In addition to the grotesque masks and the faience and glass medallions that served an apotropaic function (some dozens of which were found at Dor but will not be discussed here), there were also clay pendants which fulfilled the same role.

In the last two seasons of excavation at Dor (2006–7), a tiny clay pendant (about 5 cm high, 3 cm wide) and the heads of two grotesque figurines (Fig. 2:1–3; Pl. 2:1–3) were discovered. The pendant (Fig. 2:1; Pl. 2:1), which was uncovered in a pit that contained Persian period material, also portrays a grotesque male head. The face is distorted and wrinkled, the two projecting ears serve for suspension and, like the complete mask from Dor, it also displays a projecting circle in the center of the forehead, which we interpreted above as an apotropaic symbol. This tiny head apparently fulfilled the same function as the mask, but was worn on the neck on a votary’s chain, like the grotesque faience and glass pendants. Thus far no parallels have been found in Israel for this unique object.

Two other unique objects—the heads of Greek-style figurines—were also connected with the popular apotropaic cult. One of the heads depicts a warrior god equipped with a helmet and a cheek guard (Fig. 2:2; Pl. 2:2). This type of head was found in large numbers at Dor and is included here with the apotropaic cultic masks because of their similarity of expression: the wide grimace, projecting tongue, deeply wrinkled forehead, and bulging eyes place it firmly in the grotesque figure category. The second head is similar and represents an eastern figure (perhaps Nubian?) (Fig. 2:3; Pl. 2:3) with the same wrinkled brow, bulging eyes, and puckered mouth characteristic of an apotropaic figure whose purpose was to inspire fear. These two figurine heads are unique at Dor and, thus far, in Israel.

The figurines, depicting a “Nubian” head (Basket 06D5-1564, Fig. 2:3; Pl. 2:3) and the pendant (Basket 05D1-5500, Fig. 2:1; Pl. 2:1) were uncovered in two adjoining pits (Pits L05D1-511 and 05D1-539, respectively) in the northern part of Area D5. A study of the locus records indicates that Pit 05D1-511 is relatively small, about 1 m deep and 70 cm in diameter. The skeletons of two dogs were found in a layer of fill on top of the pit which contained a large amount of Persian period pottery, including numerous storage jars with basket handles. The pit was cut on its

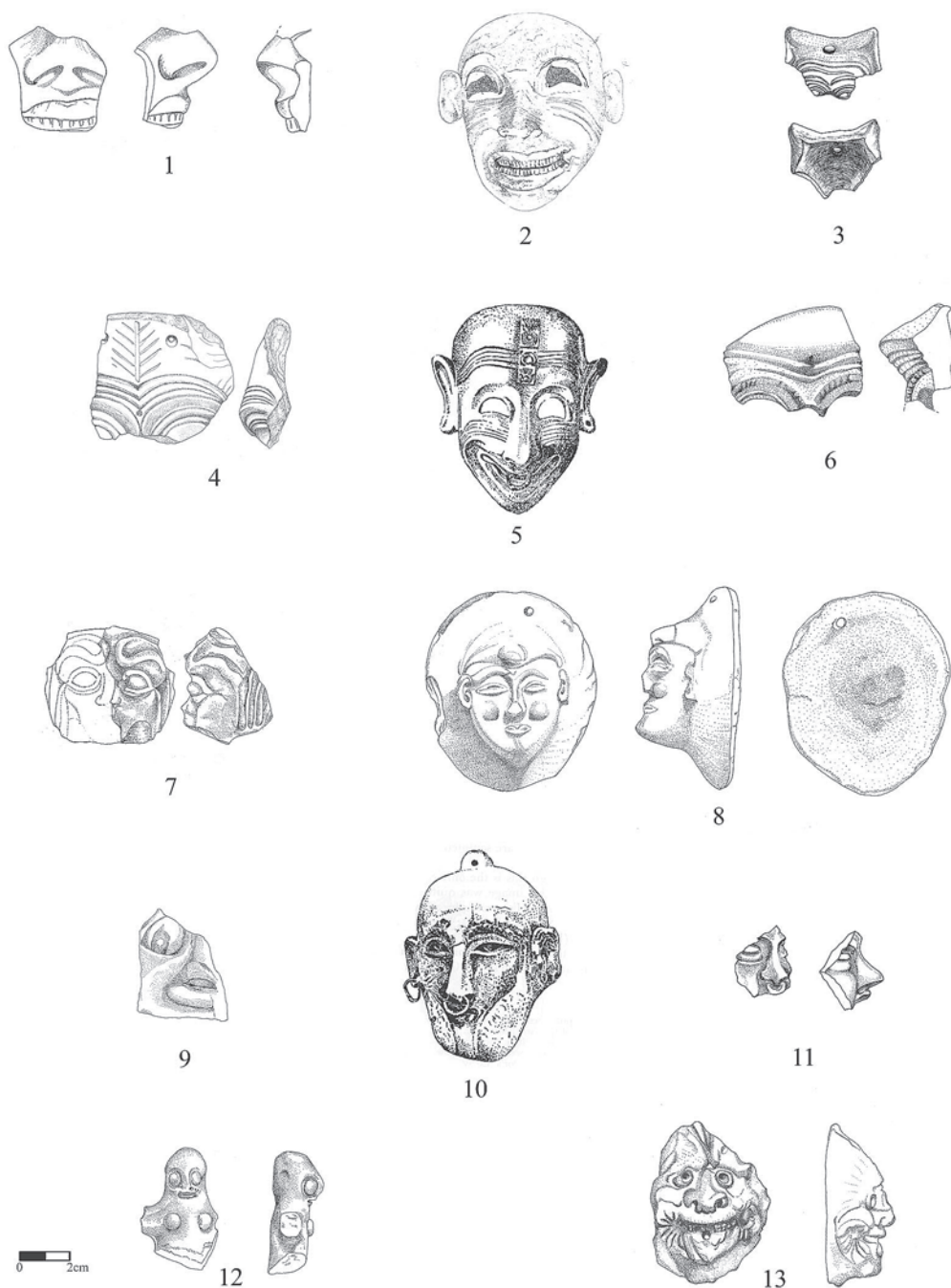
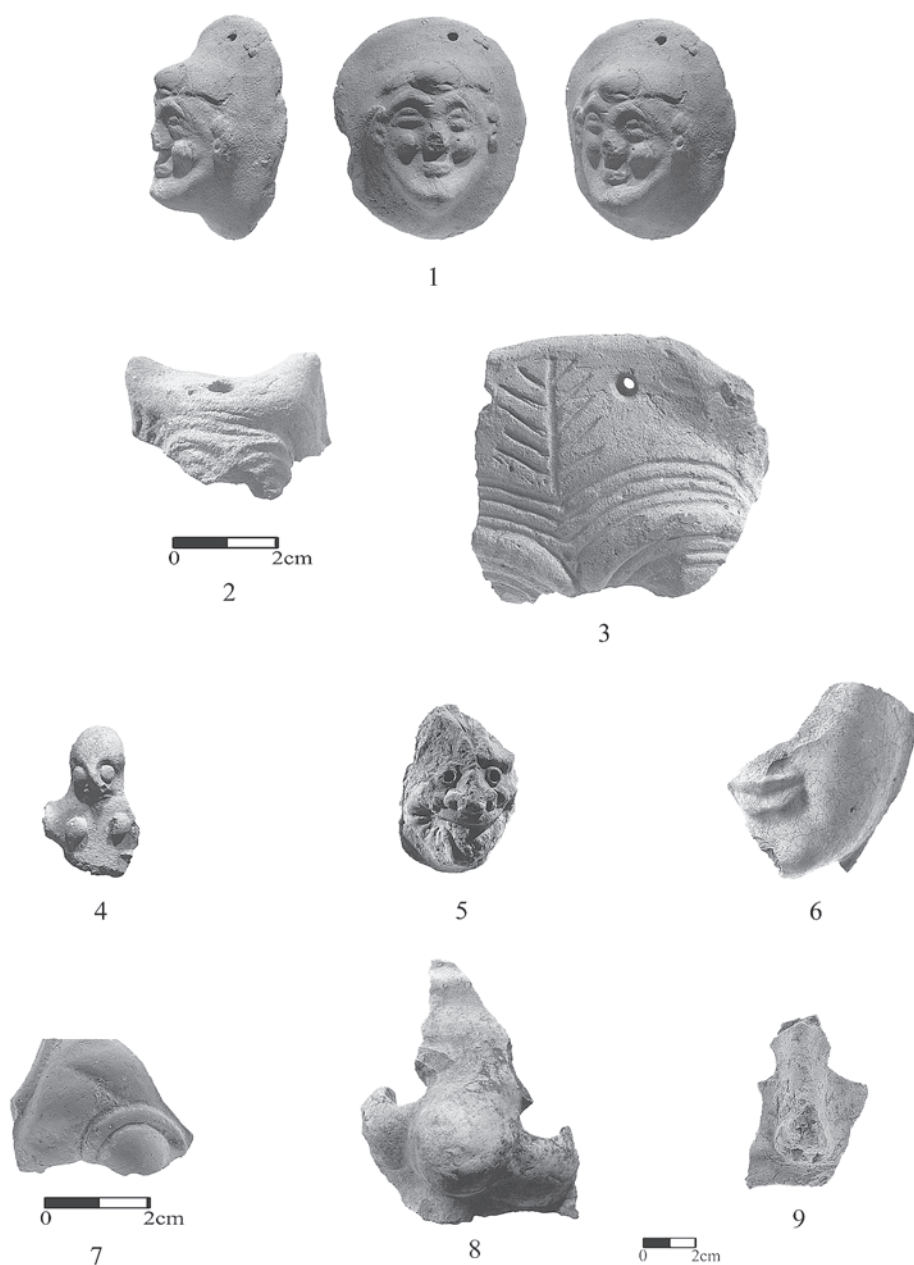


Fig. 1. From Tel Dor Project. Nos. 1, 3–4, 6–8: masks of the grotesque type from Dor; nos. 2 and 5: complete examples of the same type from Carthage and Sardinia; nos. 12–13: figurines of monsters.



Pl. 1. From Tel Dor Project. See fig. 1 for descriptions.

south side by a larger pit (L05D1-515) which also contained Persian period pottery. The top of Pit 05D1-539, in which the pendant was discovered, was surrounded by a circle of stones and at least part of the upper side was apparently stone lined. It is situated slightly south of the above pits and is larger—about 2.2 m deep and 1.5 m

in diameter. The pendant was discovered at the bottom of the pit, with a large quantity of Persian pottery.

The head of the grimacing "Greek warrior figurine" (Basket 07D5-1630, Fig. 2: 2; Pl. 2: 2) was uncovered about 5 m west of these pits, in a fill containing a large amount of Persian period pottery and two fragments of additional figurines. The graves of three dogs were found in the upper part of the fill. It is possible that in the Persian period some kind of apotropaic cult center existed in the southwestern part of the mound, of which only the pits have survived; the dog burials may also have been connected with the cult.

A somewhat larger clay head of a fearsome grotesque figure, which may have belonged to a figurine, should also be mentioned here (Stern 2000: 176, Fig. 109, here Fig. 1: 13; Pl. 1: 5). The head was broken and not found *in situ*; whether it represents a distorted human face or an animal head cannot be decided, but it too should probably be interpreted as a grotesque head intended to ward off evil spirits.

The apotropaic "Lilith" figures, i.e., "bird woman" figurines, were found at Dor (Stern 2000: 173, Fig. 105; cf. Pritchard 1975, Pl. 56: 9; here Fig. 1: 12; Pl. 1: 4), along with two fragments of miniature masks (Fig. 1: 3, 6, and Pl. 1: 2, 3) whose remaining parts exhibit deeply creased facial features.

The Second Group: Naturalistic Heads

Ordinary Masks

The second group of masks depicts male and female heads which have analogies with heads of several of the Persian period figurines. Of this type, two fragmentary masks from Dor have already been published: the first fragment was recovered in L4938 in Area C1 (Stratum VI). It depicts the lower part of a human face and was undoubtedly part of a clay mask. A second small fragment, which also seems to have belonged to a mask, was found in the same locus (cf. Stern 1995: 449, Fig. 7.6.1–2; here Fig. 3: 1, 2; Pl. 1: 6).

Several additional fragments of masks from Dor, of which mainly the noses or ears have survived (Fig. 3: 3–10; Pl. 1: 7–9), may be attributed to this group; they, however, could also have belonged to masks of the first grotesque group. Another fragment from Dor (Fig. 1: 11), which can be interpreted as part of a human mask, has a nose ring similar to the one on the Punic mask from Carthage (Stern 1976, Fig. 4; here Fig. 1: 10).

Many masks of this type are known from the Phoenician coast. One item, from Khalde, is a miniature male mask found in the Iron Age child's grave (Parrot, Chéhab and Moscati 1975: 100, Fig. 103; cf. Culican 1975, Figs. 11, 15). Others come from Sarepta (Pritchard 1988: 271, Fig. 16) and Tyre (Bikai 1978, Pl. XXIV: 77). Similar masks have also been discovered in Cyprus at Kition (Karageorghis and Demas 1985, Pl. CLXXVI: 4148, 3809) and Enkomi (Karageorghis 1993: 33, No. 2, Pl. XX: 1). A mask uncovered at Achzib depicts a bearded man (Dayagi-Mendels 2002: 158, Fig. 7.22). Other fragments of this type of mask were found in Acco (not yet published).

Another mask, perfectly intact, which was acquired in Jerusalem and is now in the Israel Museum, depicts a female figure (Hestrin and Dayagi-Mendels 1980). Other masks were found in the *favissa* at Tel Šippor (Negbi 1966: 14–15, Pl. VIII: 43, 47). Recently, fragments of two clay Iron Age masks from Judah were published (Kletter 2007); one comes from Jerusalem (Shuafat) and the other from Tel Sheba. It is quite certain that they belonged to the popular pagan cult practiced in Judah and that they also originated in the Phoenician cult world.

Numerous masks of this type were discovered in Cyprus, mainly at the Phoenician sites of Kition and Amathus. They generally depict the figure of a man with a pointed beard and the projecting apotropaic symbol in the center of the forehead, as on the mask from Dor. It should be noted that Cypriot masks of this type are unique and closely resemble one another (Karageorghis 1990; 1993; 1996).

Protomai

While most of the masks depicting human faces from Phoenicia represent men, *protomai*, mostly of women, were also found in the same regions and sites. Clay *protomai* were widespread throughout the Punic colonies, as well as in Phoenicia and Palestine. Interestingly enough, none were found at Dor, which may be merely a coincidence. Also common in the Greek world, they are found in great numbers in the west.

Protomai were discovered in all the important regions in the Punic colonies: Carthage, Sicily, Sardinia, and Spain. Almost all came from tombs, and in Motya they were also found in the area of the cremation cemetery. In all these places, they generally appear in two main types: Type A, *protomai* made under Phoenicio-Egyptian influence; Type B, *protomai* in Phoenicio-Greek style. In the first the head usually wears the Egyptian wig, the face is impassive, the eyebrows are in relief, and in some ways they resemble the heads of the well-known Astarte figurines. In the second type a veil covers the head, leaving the ears free, and hangs down to the neck. The eyes are large and slanting, the nose is pointed, and the face is smiling. It is possible that the first type is earlier (7th–6th centuries B.C.E.) than the second (mainly from the end of the 6th to the 4th century B.C.E.). On the whole, there is a close resemblance between the Phoenician and the Punic *protomai* of each type, which led S. Moscati (1968: 72) to the assumption that they originated in Carthage.

An almost identical situation can be found along the Phoenician and Palestinian coast. Here, too, the two types of *protomai* are quite common. Type A clearly belongs to the Late Iron Age, and Type B to the Persian period. There is, however, one difference: all the Type B *protomai* were found in sanctuaries or *favissae*, while most of the Type A were found—as in the west—in tombs. We have as yet no explanation for this phenomenon. Of the *protomai* found in Phoenicia and Palestine we should note especially one example, of the Late Iron Age Type A, uncovered at Beirut (Liban 1998: 115) and in the Achzib tombs (Stern 1976: Figs. 11–12; Dayagi-Mendels 2002: 156–58; Mazar, E. 2004: 82–83). One of the latter (from Achzib) (Stern 1976: Fig. 12) is unique in that it was produced in an almost pure Phoenician tradition, and the familiar disc appearing in the center of its forehead is similar to the masks from Dor (here Fig. 1:8; Pl. 1:1).



Fig. 2. From Tel Dor Project. No. 1: small clay apotropaic medalion; nos. 2–3: apotropaic clay figurine heads.



Pl. 2. From Tel Dor Project. See fig. 2 for descriptions.

Among the later Type B specimens discovered along the eastern Mediterranean coast, one *protome*, produced in a pure Rhodian-Greek style, was uncovered in a 5th–4th century B.C.E. sanctuary at Tell Sukas, a site which at that time was also inhabited by Greeks (Riis 1979: 133–34, Fig. 9).

The finds from Palestine, on the other hand, are much more impressive. Two large groups of Type B *protomai* are recorded. The first group, consisting of more than forty *protomai*, was found at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi in the Shephelah. All of them were discovered in an “old rubbish heap” (Bliss 1899: 328; Bliss and Macalister 1902: 140; cf. Avissar 2007). Fragments of some ten more *protomai* were discovered in the *favissa* of nearby Tel Ṣippor. All were found smashed and could not be restored (Negbi 1966: 14, Nos. 43–55, Pl. VIII: 42–37).

The *protomai* share one feature with the grotesque masks—many of them bear projections or incisions in the middle of the forehead (as in the masks from Dor) which we have interpreted above as apotropaic symbols (see, for example, the two *protomai* from Achzib: Stern 1976: 113, Figs. 11–12).

Silenus

Two fragments of a mask depicting the Greek god Silenus were discovered at Dor. Of the first (No. 70279/1, Locus 7061, here Fig. 3: 11) only a prominent ear and part of the forehead have survived, but there can be no doubt that it represents a mask of the head of Silenus. When the Dor fragment is placed over a complete mask of this type found at Tharos in Sardinia (Stern 2000: 175, Figs. 107–8; Ciasca 1988: 365), the similarity between the two is remarkable (here Fig. 3: 12). It is also very likely that two other heads from Dor, one (No. 150011 from Locus 15003, Area D2—Fig. 1: 3; Pl. 1: 2) also portray either heads of Silenus or satyrs. All of these belong to Cintas’s fifth group which depicts images of Silenus.

It should be borne in mind that all the Punic specimens of Silenus heads included in this group by Cintas, although they differ from one another, were not produced by Greek artisans and are far from Silenus’s classic portrait. It is, therefore, curious that the one Silenus mask found in the Phoenician cemetery at Achzib is much closer to the Greek original (Stern 1976, Pl. IX:a). The face looks younger, the ears are not pointed but rounded, and the eyes are sculpted. It has, nevertheless, the typical beard and especially the long mustache.

Silenus’s image, as is well known, was very popular among the Phoenicians, especially during the Persian period. A head of a similar Silenus figurine was discovered in the *favissa* of Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi (Bliss and Macalister 1902: 40, Fig. 14) and another was uncovered in the *favissa* of the same period at nearby Tel Ṣippor (Stern 1976, Pl. IX:b; Negbi 1966: 19, Pl. XII: 84). According to the excavators, in the same *favissa* at Tel Ṣippor was found another complete “obscene figurine representing a satyr with hoofs and horns painted vermilion” (Negbi 1966: 19). Mention should also be made of the two satyr figurines found there (Negbi 1966: 18, Nos. 78–79).

Animal Masks

The other group of masks, not found at Dor but uncovered at neighboring sites, consists of animal masks. Two, almost completely identical, were found at Achzib

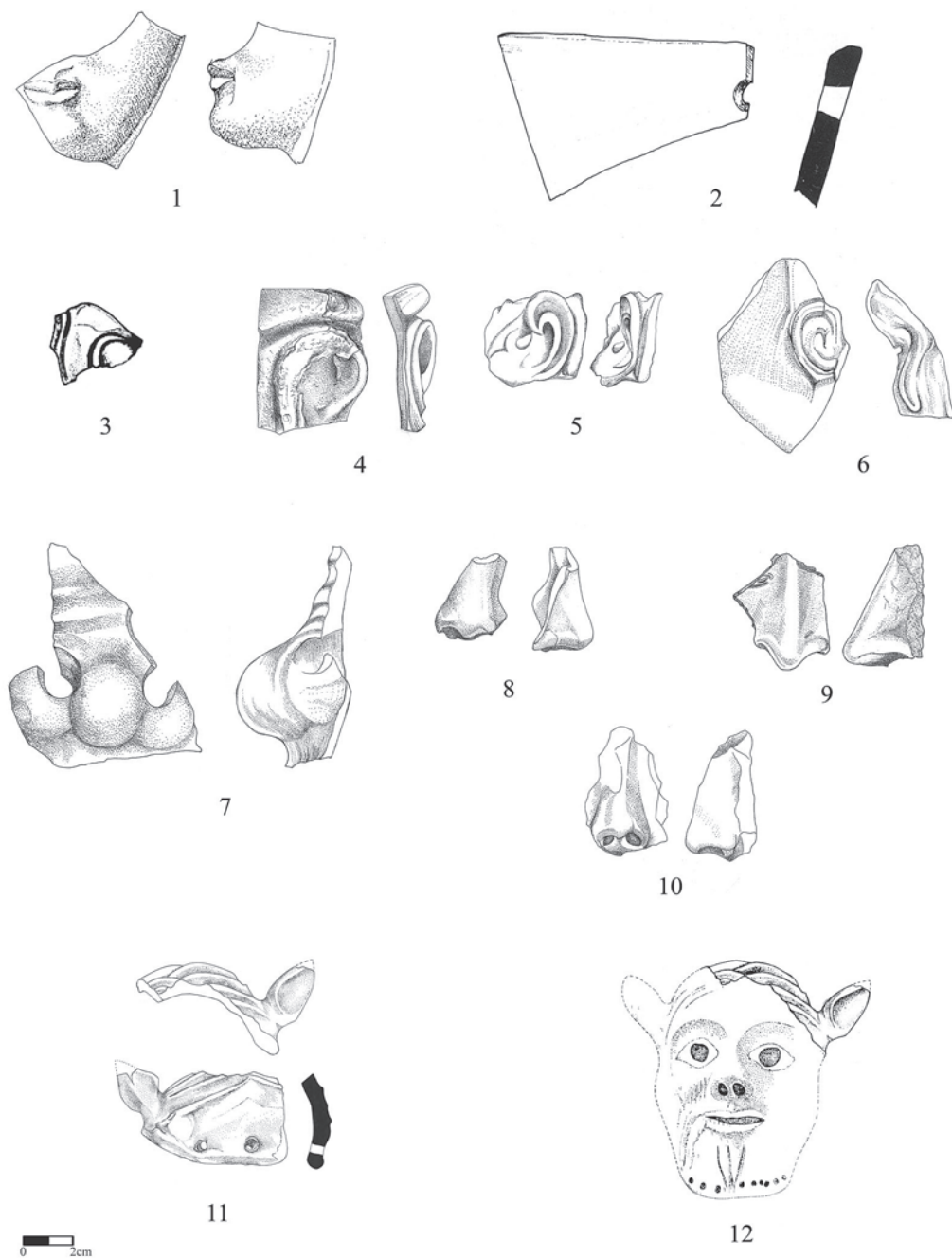


Fig. 3. From Tel Dor Project. Nos. 1–10: parts of clay masks from Dor that may belong either to the grotesque type or to heads of deities; no. 11: two fragments from Dor of a mask depicting the Greek god Silenus; no. 12: complete mask of the Silenus type from Tharos, Sardinia.

(Mazar, E. 2001: 64–65, Fig. 24:1, Photos 74–77; Dayagi-Mendels 2002: 159, Fig. 7:24) and are described as bulls' heads. Another mask which depicts a calf's head is in the collections of the Israel Museum (Hestrin and Dayagi-Mendels 1980: 84–87). Dayagi-Mendels claims that at Kition and Enkomi bull skulls were used as ritual masks in Late Cypriot III temples, where the bull probably served as the symbol of fertility. A bull mask from Cyprus has suspension holes (Myers 1914: 342, No. 2073).

Male figures wearing bull masks, probably priests participating in a ritual ceremony, are known from Cyprus (Karageorghis 1987: Pl. II:5, 6). The Cypro-Archaic clay figurines representing priests wearing bull masks may allude to one function of the masks (Karageorghis 1971: 262). Three bull masks, defined by their excavators as *oscilla*, were discovered at Kourion in Cyprus (Young and Young 1955: 949–51).

Conclusions

The entire category of finds—masks, *protomai*, and some of the glass and faience pendants—can be classified into two main groups.

The first group consists of the “Grotesque Family,” which represents demonic figures whose essential function, as is generally agreed, is apotropaic. The Silenus masks should also be attributed to this category.

The function of the second group, the naturalistic, comprising some masks, all the female *protomai*, and the pendants portraying non-grimacing male and female heads, remains open to dispute. Moscati (1978: 63–64) believed them to “represent divine images so that the apotropaic function would be non-existent or secondary while the protective and votive function would be fundamental.” Yadin (1970: 223) tended to identify them as the representation of the “face” of Baal and his consort. This hypothesis is strengthened by the Cypriot clay figurines that depict “Cypriot priests wearing bull-masks” (Karageorghis 1971) as well as some clay bull-masks. In one of the sanctuaries at Kition dating to the 8th century B.C.E., which, according to a Phoenician inscription, was dedicated to the goddess Astarte, some worked bull-skulls were found.

Even after taking all this evidence into account, it is still probable that the second group, too, had mainly an apotropaic function. The projecting and tattooed discs depicted on the forehead of the Dor masks and the Achzib *protomai* may, of course, be interpreted as a divine symbol; on the other hand, they may simply be understood as charms designed to ward off evil, exactly like the more sophisticated tattoos and discs on the foreheads of some of the grotesque masks. If so, both groups are merely two variants of an artifact whose apotropaic function served to differentiate them from all the other contemporary votives—figurines and statuettes.

Another possible explanation of these finds—proposed by M. Dayagi-Mendels (2002: 159–60)—is that in the case of the life-size masks, the cut-out eyes and mouth suggest that they were worn by living persons, perhaps by priests or worshippers during religious rituals.

The smaller masks could have been placed on statues or in tombs. Those found in tombs are generally considered to have served an apotropaic purpose. Their

widespread use in burials in the Punic world led Culican (1975: 71) to posit that they were part of a burial custom which involved the use of the mask of a specific demon or deity. Moscati (1968: 164) hypothesized that the female *protomai* were divine images, so that their fundamental significance was their protective and votive functions.

It is possible that when placed in tombs, the masks were meant to ward off evil spirits, whereas in shrines they could have either formed part of the cult paraphernalia or have served as votive offerings.

Whatever the case may be, there can be no doubt that these artifacts were not only "a typical Carthaginian production in terracotta . . . which have oriental antecedents" (Moscati 1973: 63). Rather, they were typical Canaanite-Phoenician products that were imitated in the Punic world.

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The Waters of Shiloah (Isaiah 8:5–8)

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Throughout his academic career David Ussishkin has published influentially on various aspects of the archaeology of Jerusalem. A topic which he has considered on more than one occasion is the original extent and purpose of “Hezekiah’s Tunnel,” and this draws into its wake references to some of the other water courses in ancient times (Ussishkin 1976; 1995). After nine seasons of archaeological apprenticeship under his direction I am well aware that there is nothing I can teach him in terms of the *realia* of the site. There is, however, a reference to Jerusalem’s water supply in a biblical text which has given the commentators much difficulty over the years, and I trust that this consideration of some of its challenges will therefore prove to be of at least tangential interest to him.

The oracle in Isaiah 8:5–8 begins with a reference to “this people” rejecting “the waters of Shiloah which flow gently.” It then becomes textually very uncertain, however, and this uncertainty has led to considerable disagreement as to the identification of “this people” and also as to the date and setting of the oracle as a whole. Partly as a consequence of this latter disagreement, the referent of “the waters of Shiloah” has also been disputed. While there are other significant issues raised by this passage, not least the interpretation and literary status of the last line in v. 8, I have space here to deal only with these interrelated introductory matters, and must leave other questions open for discussion on another occasion.

Let us begin with a consideration of the text following the words already quoted: ומשׁושׁ את־רִצִּין וּבֶן־רַמְלִיָּהוּ. As punctuated in MT, ומשׁושׁ is to be construed with what follows. The reading is textually reasonably secure, being apparently presupposed by most, if not all, of the versions (cf. Sweeney 1993) as well as being clearly attested in 4QIsa^e and 4QIsa^f. Interestingly, however, 1QIsa^a has ומשׁישׁ, apparently a hiphil participle, “and causing Rezin and the son of Remaliah to rejoice.” In this interpretation, את is clearly the direct object marker, and indeed the scroll repeats it before the second object as well. Although this reading might be associated with one modern minority line of interpretation which finds in “this people” a reference to the inhabitants of the northern kingdom, it is isolated, and probably not to be followed, as we shall see later.¹ There has been some disagreement over whether ומשׁושׁ should be construed as a noun or some part of the verb. GK §130a and JM §129n both imply that it is a noun, but as Gray (1912) observes, there is no secure parallel for the

1. Sweeney 1993 toys with the idea that Peshitta and Targum might also presuppose a hiphil form but concludes that it is unlikely; in Classical Hebrew no hiphil of שׁוּשׁ is attested, and even later it is rare.

use of the construct before **את**. Most probably we should follow those who draw attention to the usage in 66:10 as justifying the early understanding of the word as a verbal noun, which, though awkward, could justify the rendering “and rejoice with Rezin.”² To this parallel I should add that at 62:5 I have argued quite separately that **ומשוש** is also to be construed in a quasi-verbal sense (Williamson 2000), so strengthening the probability that this was acceptable usage, even if strange to us.

It is questionable, however, whether the Masoretes were correct in dividing the verse in this way. The strongest counter-argument comes from the very clear parallel structure between this verse and the first half of the following one. (Curiously, Klein 1980 makes the strongest case for this parallel structure without even mentioning the consequential difficulties which follow for the Masoretic division.) In the first line, an action of “this people” is matched by a judgmental counter-action of God; in the second, the waters of Shiloah are matched by the waters of the River (**את מל** in both cases); and in the third there are explanatory references to kings, introduced each time by **את**. It seems clear, therefore, that (regardless for the moment of whether the third line is part of the original composition or a later gloss) the **את** should be construed in the same way, each time introducing the line in question. This, however, is not possible in the case of the Masoretic division, because in the first place it introduces the third line of v. 6 with **ומשוש**, and in the second place **את** there has to be the preposition “with,” not the object marker, as in v. 7.³ I am not aware of any scholarly defence of MT as it stands that takes account of this very obvious difficulty. It is of further support to this conclusion that in v. 7 the second line concludes with two descriptive words of the “waters of the River” (**העצמים והרבים**), and that if **ומשוש** is included with the second line of v. 6, the same could be true there, too, though with the difference that the words are apparently used adverbially rather than adjectivally (**לאט ומשוש**).

This same argument also rules out a number of emendations which have been proposed in the past, while others seem unlikely on grounds of sense. In addition, some become rather far-reaching, whereas we have noted earlier that there is little or no basis for significant textual doubt in this passage. They must therefore be listed only briefly, even though some have been quite influential.

(1) Many have thought that the word should be read as, or taken as an irregularly spelled form of, **מסס** or **מסס**, “melt in fear,” which is usually used in the niphal, but occurs once in the qal at 10:18. Hitzig (1833), who first advanced this suggestion, thought that here it was unusually followed by the accusative, but that would be unprecedented and so most who have followed him have further emended **את** to

2. So, for instance, Sweeney 1993; Barthélemy 1986: 50; Barthel 1997: 199–200; Beuken 2003. Delitzsch 1889 further compares the use of **מסס** in Num 10:2 in support. Wagner 2006: 170–71 reaches the same conclusion, but considers **ומשוש** to be a participle. Huber 1976: 84 suggests as an alternative that the clause might be construed as circumstantial, which would come to much the same.

3. See Fullerton (1924: 254–55) for a full survey of the use of verbs of rejoicing followed (where appropriate) always by prepositions, and never once by a direct object marker (35:1 is not a counter-example, *pace* Gesenius 1821). Furthermore, as Sweeney 1993: 50 points out, the verb **שוש** is followed by **את** = “with” at his key comparative text, 66:10. These are the only two texts where this particular combination occurs.

(מֶן) (Duhm 1892), or מִלְפָּנֵי or מִפְּנֵי (Skinner 1897; Marti 1900; Feldmann 1925–26; Wade 1929; cf. RSV: “and melt in fear before Rezin”) or מִשְׂאָת, “because of the pride of” (Budde 1926; Wildberger 1980; slightly differently, Lindblom 1958: 44–45 accepts the emendation but retains the meaning “dissolve,” seeing in it the apodosis of the opening clause of the verse: “Because this people despises . . . it shall surely dissolve together with Rezin”). However, these suggestions not only destroy the close parallel structure of the passage, but also emend further without warrant, postulate a verb in a rarely attested theme, omit the word לִב, which is usually, if not invariably, included in this construction, and postulate oddly that, just when a verb was chosen to make a word-play with מַאֵס, it was either spelled uniquely with a different sibilant or else was corrupted to that unusual form.

(2) An alternative line of emendation is adopted by Donner (1964: 23) and Müller (1974: 45–46), following an undocumented reference to Klostermann. In this case the two words are again run together but this time as מִשְׂאָת, “because of the devastation/ruin of.” Unfortunately, this proposal too overlooks the parallel structure of vv. 6 and 7a.

(3) More for the sake of completeness than any sense of conviction, I note here a few further proposals which have not, apparently, gained any support whatever, generally for rather obvious reasons. (a) Ehrlich (1912: 33–34) read the verb as מִשֵּׁשׁ, “feel, grope,” with the following אֵת as introducing its direct object. (b) Honeyman (1944) suggested that the second ש was originally a superscript letter, added to make clear which sibilant was intended by the first and because this was not understood later it came mistakenly to be incorporated into the text. The original therefore read וּמִשְׁשׁוּ = וּמִשֵּׁשׁ (infinitive absolute for finite verb), “and they drew up (from the water) Rezin.” (c) Schroeder (1912) conjectures that the original Hebrew form of רִצִּין was רִצִּון and that this will therefore have stood in the text at first. An early reader did not recognize it as a proper name and so glossed it with the virtually synonymous word מִשְׁשׁוּ.

Given these obvious difficulties, greater attraction resides in an alternative emendation, again to מִסֵּס (or else to retain MT as a variant spelling of the same) but this time linking it with what precedes and bracketing the following words as a later gloss. On this view, the word is a second qualification of “the waters of Shiloah” and means something like “melting away” (Burkitt 1911 [“trickling”]; Procksch 1930; Kissane 1941; cf. BHS). The obvious difficulty here, however, is that the waters of Shiloah represent something in which the people were clearly expected to have trust, so that the picture of them melting away is wholly inappropriate. Perhaps seeing this, Clements (1980) follows NEB in translating “gently” (Brockington 1973: 177 indicates that the translators here in fact presupposed מִשְׁשׁוּשׁ), but it is not clear how this can be justified as a rendering of מִסֵּס.

Finally, there are those who delete not just the nominal phrase as a later gloss, but מִשְׁשׁוּ along with it (e.g., Gray 1912; Fullerton 1924). This obviously removes the problem, but it is not entirely satisfactory in that it leaves the two adjectives in the parallel v. 7a with only one equivalent in v. 6 and also means that the addition (which this theory presupposes) is of a different nature from that in v. 7. If possible, it would be preferable to retain the word as a companion to לֵאט.

In my opinion a possible solution is to take the word as what it seems to be, namely a derivative of the root שוש or שיש, and to construe it with a sense for which there seems to be evidence elsewhere of joy-bringing. The main point would be to emphasize the attractiveness of the provision and in doing so perhaps to allude by contrast to the imagery drawn from the divine conflict with the chaos waters.⁴ The significance of “joyfully” here (as we might loosely render) is that the waters bring joy to the people. This notion is associated elsewhere with Zion and its water (sometimes exaggerated, but no doubt with the Gihon Spring at its base). In Ps 46:3–4, for instance, we are presented with the image of the chaotic seas whose waters roar in threatening manner, and this is followed in v. 5 with the contrasting affirmation that “there is a river, whose streams make glad (ישמחו) the city of God,” while in Ps 48:3 the holy mountain is described as “the joy of the whole earth (משוש כל-הארץ).” In both cases, it is clear that this has to do with bringing joy, not being joyful in itself. Similarly, in Isa 60:15 Zion is promised that she is to become “a joy (משוש) of many generations” and in 65:18 God says that he will “create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy” (משוש), while in Lam 2:15 the phrase already cited from Ps 48:3 is recalled as how the city was regarded in earlier and happier times. (Without explicit reference to joy, one may also compare more remotely Ps 36:9–10.) Given these associations (and the obvious fact that of all the words available to express joy or gladness this one will have been chosen because of the sound-play with מאס), it may be suggested that our text originally contrasted the gentle and joy-bringing waters of Shiloah with the strong and “many” (i.e., overwhelming) waters of the River (Euphrates) in the next verse. The word will probably have been vocalized as a noun used adverbially (ומְשֹׁשׁ), and the Masoretes will have been obliged to change this to the present form once it was conjoined with the following phrase. A possible alternative that might be considered is to adopt the reading of 1QIsa^a (ומשׁישׁ, a hiphil participle), but originally without the following words as object. Either way it would follow from this proposal that the last phrase of the verse must indeed have been a later explanatory gloss. While we may therefore be confident that MT should be construed as “and rejoice in Rezin,” it is likely that the original text had “slowly and causing joy/joyfully.”

In the light of this discussion, we may move next to the question of date. At first sight the passage would seem to be firmly anchored in the complex of events generally known as the Syro-Ephraimite crisis. Closer examination reveals, however, that this setting is less secure than at first appears.

First, in terms of setting, the juxtaposition of vv. 1–4 and 5–8 is clearly redactional. This seems clear both from the wording of v. 5, which introduces a third-person speech by God (cf. v. 7) as though it were part of a direct address by him to Isaiah, and from the form of vv. 6–8 as a classic announcement of judgment. According to Westermann’s analysis (1964: 120–26), it includes all the major elements of the form: accusation (“Because”), messenger formula (“therefore, behold”), in-

4. Cf. Day 1985: 103–4. For the development of the theme of the river flowing from Jerusalem in more visionary passages such as Ezek 47:1–12, Joel 4:18, Zech 14:8, and Isa 33:21, see concisely Gordon 2004: 69–71.

tervention of God (“the Lord is about to bring”), and results of the intervention (“and it will rise over”) (I have omitted his inclusion of the development of the accusation because in the analysis presented here that comprises a later addition to the original oracle). In other words, the oracle should be construed as originally independent and free standing and not composed specifically for the present setting. There is patently no *direct* continuation of vv. 1–4 in vv. 5–8. The question of when the juxtaposition of vv. 1–4 and 5–8 occurred is thus theoretically open.

Second, in terms of the content of the oracle itself, it has to be noted that all the elements which seem to tie it specifically to its current literary setting in the course of the Syro-Ephraimite crisis are included in those elements which are widely regarded as later, historicising glosses in vv. 6 and 7. Against the attempt by Klein (1980) to defend the full integrity of the text on the basis of its parallel threefold formulation, we saw above that in fact this very parallelism tells against his position. He is able to make sense of the text only by including מַשְׁרוֹשׁ in v. 6 with the following reference to Rezin and the son of Remaliah (so the Masoretes), but the parallel structure with the following lines and the need to render אַת in each case as the accusative marker rather than differently, as in Klein’s proposal, makes clear that it belongs with what precedes. Given that the reference to the king of Assyria in v. 7 clearly interrupts the connection between the river in the previous line and the discussion of how it will flow on in the following line, and given the tendency for such explanations to be included elsewhere in the near context (cf. 7:17 and 20), it should certainly be concluded that neither of the lines introduced by אַת was included in the original form of this passage. This has long been recognized by the majority of commentators, and Fullerton’s discussion (1924), though older, also retains much of value in this regard.

Three possible dates have therefore been canvassed in recent discussions: (1) the traditional date is still favored by many; (2) Dietrich (1976: 158–61) still ascribes the oracle to Isaiah but dates its origin to the time of Hezekiah and his revolt against Assyria. The waters of v. 6 may be linked with Hezekiah’s Tunnel, and it is considered that the revolt by Hezekiah is a more appropriate cause for Assyrian aggression than the earlier events of the Syro-Ephraimite affair; and (3) several scholars have most recently proposed that the passage is wholly post-Isaianic (Becker 1997: 102–9; Kratz 2003; de Jong 2007: 68–70; previously, though on rather different grounds, a similar date was also proposed by Kaiser 1981: 178–81).

In my view, the opinion of Dietrich, which rests on an identification of “the waters of Shiloah” with the newly built tunnel by Hezekiah, so that the oracle belongs with others relating to Sennacherib’s campaign, is least likely. I can find no connection between the people’s rejection of that building enterprise and the coming of the Assyrians; if anything, 22:11 would suggest rather that it would have been their support for such work which would have merited condemnation.

The (widely-shared) understanding of these waters, defended further below, is that they refer rather to the channel which led from the Gihon spring to the southern part of the city along its eastern flank (Channel II). This channel went out of use once the tunnel was built—indeed, it would have been dry according to the

usual view (Ussishkin 1995: 296)—so that the easiest dating of our passage is prior to the building of the tunnel; it is unlikely that much later one would have referred so naturally to this out-of-date channel (even if its existence was still remembered); the name itself was not transferred to the modern Siloam until much later—certainly later than Neh 3:15.⁵

The suggestion that the passage is wholly post-exilic has been advanced most strongly by Becker (1997: 102–9), who makes the following points. Granted that the only firm chronological indicators are all included in what are widely agreed to be explanatory glosses, one may think that without them the fall of Judah in 587 B.C.E. provides a more satisfying explanation for the description of complete devastation; certainly there is nothing in the original poem to suggest its applicability to the Syro-Ephraimite crisis or its aftermath. He stresses the fact that v. 5 indicates that the following verses have been added to their present context, and he asserts that on the basis of their respective contents vv. 6–8 could not come from the same hand as 1–4; the strongly theological outlook of vv. 5–8, which is lacking in vv. 1–4, points to the later addition of our passage. Two details support this: (1) the use of עֲצוּם, “mighty,” in v. 7 is often attested in later texts and with reference to the pre-Israelite inhabitants of the land; our passage may therefore be seen as a reversal of the original gift of the land. (2) The reference to the Euphrates (“the River,” v. 7) is more appropriate for the Babylonians than the Assyrians. Finally, it is important to note that Becker explicitly adduces as an argument the fact that the verses presuppose the inclusion of 6:9 + 11 in the call-vision, an inclusion which he has already maintained is much later than the time of Isaiah himself. He finds the same hand at work in the composition of our passage, and so dates it to the early post-exilic period.

These arguments in favor of a late date do not seem to me to be persuasive. First, much depends either way on the view taken of the literary growth of ch. 6. This is too big a topic to be tackled here, but, to give an example of just one counter-argument, if, as I have suggested elsewhere (in agreement with many other commentators), 6:12–13a is an exilic addition to a pre-exilic expression of judgment, then Becker’s proposal that vv. 9 and 11 were composed even later than that seems to be ruled out (Williamson 2004: 195–97). A major motivation for him to eliminate any judgmental threat from Isaiah’s work (a view now argued more fully by de Jong

5. Debate about the etymology of the name is of no importance in this connection. The spelling here, הַשְּׁלַח, is not precisely attested elsewhere, though cf. בְּרֶכֶת הַשְּׁלַח in Neh 3:15. Sometimes the word has been associated with the familiar root שָׁלַח (cf. John 9:7), which in the piel is occasionally associated directly with water (e.g., Ezek 31:4; Ps 104:10). More commonly appeal is made to Akkadian *šiliḫtu*, part of a canal, so perhaps a side-channel (*HAL* and Wildberger 1980), but this seems to be rare and rather specifically local (cf. *CAD* 17/2:443), so that it is far from certain; the suggestion is not included in Mankowski 2000. The vocalization may be based on גִּיחֹן in our verse and on בְּרֶכֶת in Neh 3:15. The spelling is also uncertain. 1QIsa^a has a ך following the ש (“the one who sends,” presumably referring to God); 4QIsa^a may have the same, or possibly a י (which would then support MT’s vocalization). In addition, the final letter in 4QIsa^a is almost certainly a ה rather than a ח, which Ulrich 1997: 93 thinks indicates confusion with the (northern) city of Shiloh; more probably, it attests a dependence on a messianically interpreted Gen 49:10. Finally, while the versions generally seem to presuppose MT, LXX has Σιλωάμ (contrast Josephus Σιλωά), no doubt with the later pool at the end of “Hezekiah’s Tunnel” in mind.

2007) is thus itself eliminated. His other arguments are mainly supplementary: I agree that the assemblage of 8:1–4 + 5–8 is “redactional,” but that can apply as much to the early stage of composition as the later. His argument that “the River” suggests Babylon rather than Assyria is modern surmise based on a geographical knowledge that would hardly have applied in antiquity, and he himself points to the completely counter evidence of Jer 2:18⁶ (see too Isa 11:15–16); his remarks on “mighty” seem speculative.

By contrast with these proposals to date the original parts of 8:5–8 late, the usual view which locates the oracle relatively early in Isaiah’s ministry still has much to commend it. From the content relating to the waters of Shiloah, a date prior to the building of the tunnel seems to be demanded. In addition, from outside the oracle this early dating⁷ receives support from the fact that v. 8 is echoed in ch. 28 (see especially vv. 15–18 and 28; Dekker 2007: 116–18, 149) and so should predate it. While this is admittedly only relative, it certainly tells against a post-exilic date and, when coupled with the argument from the most likely interpretation of the waters of Shiloah, fits well with a date in the first part of Isaiah’s ministry.

What, then, may be said in the light of these considerations about the identity of “this people”? Three suggestions about this have been advanced in the past, namely that the words refer to (1) the people of Judah as a whole, (2) a group or party within Judah that favors the plans of the northern coalition to depose Ahaz and to install a new king who will ally Judah with the anti-Assyrian coalition, and (3) the people of the northern kingdom of Israel. The situation is further complicated by the possibility that the glossator who added the final words in the verse, or the Masoretes who redivided the line, may have understood the phrase differently from the original author.

At the level of the original text as we have reconstructed it, there seems to be no alternative to interpreting “this people” as the people of Judah as a whole (no doubt including the royal family), and this, indeed, has been the widely held view in the past. The nation had been offered deliverance from the current threat, but by their response they had evidently “rejected” this, as a result of which worse consequences would follow (v. 7). Although the precise nature of Judah’s rejection is not stated, many commentators have linked it in particular with Ahaz’s appeal to Assyria for help against the northern coalition (cf. 2 Kgs 16:7–9; in addition to several commentaries, see especially Donner 1964: 22–25; Huber 1976: 84–87). It is noteworthy, however, that this is never mentioned in Isaiah, so that it is likely that he had a wider agenda than just this in mind.

6. There is disagreement among the commentators over whether Assyria in this verse refers indeed to Assyria or whether it refers rather to Babylon; for something of a compromise position, see Jones 1992: 89. This does not, however, affect the issue that the River and Assyria could be naturally associated in antiquity.

7. This assumes that the tunnel was indeed built by Hezekiah, as is usually assumed on the basis of 2 Kgs 20:20. Knauf (2001) has suggested that it would fit better with the rebuilding programme of Manasseh. Were he correct, this would, of course, also rule out Dietrich’s hypothesis, though it would leave open a wider range of potential dates within Isaiah’s ministry. Recent dating on the basis of a ¹⁴carbon analysis of organic material trapped in the tunnel’s ancient plaster confirms an Iron II date, but cannot, of course, adjudicate on such a narrow range as between Hezekiah and Manasseh; cf. Frumkin and Shimron 2006.

At a later stage, whose date is difficult to determine, but presumably after ch. 7 had been included,⁸ a glossator added here and in v. 7 explanatory notes which sought to identify the waters more specifically. Just like ch. 7's application of the hardening saying (6:9–10) in more individualistic terms with reference to the monarch, so here the original application in terms of the people as a whole is refocused on some individual kings. That v. 7 should be linked with the king of Assyria is clear enough, but the link in our verse with Rezin and the son of Remaliah is less obvious. (This no doubt accounts for the redivision of the line in MT, to which we will return below.) The clear parallel with v. 7 as well as basic grammar (note the resumptive use of *אָה*) means that they ought to be being equated with the waters of Shiloah (so rightly Gray 1912, who then just thinks that the glossator was in error), not with "this people," as though the latter were a reference to the northern kingdom which centuries before had rejected the ruling Davidic dynasty. In any case, this latter scenario would not explain the inclusion of a reference to Rezin. But this seems to make little sense: it implies that Judah's refusal to accede to the demands of the Syro-Ephraimite coalition to join an anti-Assyrian coalition brought upon them the wrath of Assyria. I conclude, therefore, that the glossator was not thinking in quite those terms. Given his knowledge of the wider context (including especially, for instance, 7:17, where an identically worded gloss indicates that the king of Assyria will be responsible for disastrous times for Ahaz, his house, and his people on account of Ahaz's response, as reported there, to Isaiah's advice about how to proceed in the Syro-Ephraimite crisis), I propose that he was keen to draw the parallel here too between the smaller and the greater evil. Drawing on the names as given in ch. 7, therefore, he glossed v. 6 as indicating that the people's rejection of God's protection was related to the Syro-Ephraimite crisis in particular, as a result of which the greater threat of the Assyrian invasion would follow (for examples of the use of *אָה* to introduce a gloss even when not strictly suitable from a grammatical point of view, see Driver 1957: 127). If this looser interpretation is correct, then here too "this people" will have referred to Judah.

Perhaps precisely because of this looser juxtaposition, the Masoretes adopted a new approach, and one which quite a number of more recent commentators have followed (e.g., Klein 1980; Deck 1991: 84–86 [with considerable caution], Irvine 1990: 184–91, Barthel 1997: 198–203, Berges 1998: 108, and Blenkinsopp 2000). They separated *וּמִשְׂרֹשׁ* from its original position in a pair with *לֵאזֵט* and joined it with what follows to give the rendering "and rejoice with Rezin and the son of Remaliah" (so spoiling the clear parallel with v. 7, as already noted).⁹ The suggestion here seems to be that "this people" refers not to Judah as a whole, quite obviously, but rather to a group or party within Judah that disagreed with Ahaz's isolationist stance and favored rather the plans of the northern kings to join an anti-Assyrian coalition. It is not unreasonable to suppose that there should have been those in Ju-

8. In my opinion, the third-person narrative in ch. 7 must be later than the first-person material in chs. 6 and 8; for a full discussion, see Williamson 1998: 73–100.

9. Young (1965), Oswalt (1986), and Auret (1990) propose that Judah "has rejoiced in the defeat of her northern enemies," but I can see no linguistic justification for this construal.

dah who would have taken this view, though why their existence should itself have been considered sufficient cause for God's judgment in the shape of the Assyrians to fall upon the whole country, which appears not to have followed their advice, is unclear. This view is usually associated with interpreting the waters of Shiloah as a reference to the Davidic king, which I regard as difficult. It also introduces a referent for "this people" which is found nowhere else in the wider context, so that it seems improbable despite its current scholarly popularity.

There has been one further proposal for the identification of "this people," and that is that it refers to the inhabitants of the northern kingdom of Israel (a few, such as Delitzsch 1889, think that the reference is to both Israel and Judah simultaneously). The previous paragraph in vv. 1–4 spoke of them, so that, it is suggested, it is more obvious that they should be the antecedent than Judah (Jerome; Lowth 1778; Cheyne 1880–81; Rignell 1956; Motyer 1993; Høgenhaven 1988: 99–102). Furthermore, they are a natural subject for those who rejoiced with Rezin and the son of Remaliah (MT), so that, it is thought, the text can be understood in a natural way on this approach. Finally, vv. 7–8 suggest that the Assyrians will be involved somewhere else (v. 7) before they "sweep on into Judah" (v. 8), so that the inclusion of these non-Judeans in the passage is to be expected. On this view, their rejection of the waters of Shiloah looks back to the time of the division of the monarchy after the death of Solomon; their anti-Davidic stance both then and now justifies their punishment by the Assyrians.

This line of argument is unconvincing, however. Although it is true that the northern kingdom is referred to as "this people" in 9:15, there it follows a very clear reference to Israel in v. 13, whereas here v. 4 refers not just to Samaria but also to Damascus, so that there is no justification for arguing for Israel alone from the nearer context. More importantly, it is most unlikely that the break from Judah long ago would only now be punished by the Assyrian invasion: there is no sensible connection between the two. And finally it is quite unclear why the division in the kingdom should have been described here so unusually as a rejection of the waters of Shiloah. This whole line of interpretation, though it has ancient roots, should be abandoned. It fits neither our reconstructed original text nor the Masoretic text that is available to us.

I conclude, therefore, that Isaiah himself referred "this people" to the Judeans as a whole, as did the original glossator, but that, by their new division of the line, the Masoretes later referred it to a smaller group or party within the nation.

This allows us finally to consider the referent of "the waters of Shiloah" during what, I have argued, should be the first period of Isaiah's ministry. So far as the physical identification is concerned, there is not much controversy once a reference to Hezekiah's Tunnel is ruled out. The added statement that the waters "flow gently" implies a steady stream, so that this is unlikely to refer directly to the Gihon Spring; although this is the only perennial source of water in Jerusalem, it is a syphon-type karstic spring which results in a pulsating rather than a steady flow (so perhaps its name from גִּיחַ, "to burst out"). Moreover, an intermittent flow would not be suitable as a contrast with the following verse.

Although Shiloah is not mentioned elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, the “wall of the Pool of Shelah” is referred to in the post-exilic Neh 3:15, and it can hardly be totally dissociated. While there are uncertainties about the identification of this site as well (see Williamson 1985: 207–8 for fuller discussion), it must have been close to the Spring Gate and so have lain to the south of the city. Wilkinson (1978) has argued not unreasonably that it may most plausibly be identified with the modern Birket el Hamra. More recently, Ussishkin 1995: 296 accepts this so far as the original Channel II was concerned, but argues that this was replaced by a different pool slightly farther to the east when, in his view, Hezekiah’s Tunnel was continued into the Kidron Valley to irrigate the King’s Garden. Either way, it is clear that Shiloah is not to be identified with the Pool of Siloam as known from later times at the present end of Hezekiah’s Tunnel. The most plausible suggestion, therefore, is that the waters of Shiloah were a channel by which the water of the Gihon was directed along the east side of the city towards the south, and this has usually been identified with what has come to be known as Channel (or Canal) II; it is partly open and partly covered, and it has various openings that apparently allowed it to be used for the irrigation of the Kidron Valley.¹⁰ Reports of the most recent archaeological work in the area refine our understanding of the construction of this Channel, seeing it as developed in two stages, the first 190 m or so long in the Middle Bronze II period and the remainder in the late Iron Age II period at a date which “slightly predated the cutting of Hezekiah’s Tunnel” (Reich and Shukron 2002; cf. 2004). This need not affect the position so far as the days of Isaiah are concerned. It may be assumed that by this stage the Channel had been extended, but even if it had not Isaiah’s reference would be satisfied by the original shorter channel. The important point would be that the large rock-cut pool discovered in recent times near the Gihon Spring, which was fed by a short tunnel leading off Channel II, would probably have had the effect of making the flow of water farther south in the Channel more even than at the Gihon itself.

What then, in conclusion, is the force of the imagery as used here? Many commentators have argued that the waters depict God himself as the protector and sustainer of Zion (cf. Hitzig 1833; Cheyne 1880–81; Dillmann 1890; Duhm 1892; Skinner 1897; Marti 1900; Gray 1912; and virtually all commentators since). In conjunction with such psalms as 46 and 48, it is recalled that in Ugaritic mythology the high god El’s throne was situated at the head of two streams, so that the reference to streams in the present context is thought to recall God’s kingship and his dominance over the chaotic waters of the following verse.

Another group of commentators, by contrast, finds here a more specific reference to the Davidic kingship (itself closely associated, of course, with the wider Zion traditions); cf. Targum; Rashi; Kimhi; Ibn Ezra; Gesenius 1821; Delitzsch 1889; and recently most fully Irvine 1990: 189–90. It is observed that according to 1 Kings 1:33–34 and 38–39, and perhaps Ps 110:7, Gihon was associated on at least some

10. It is of historical interest to note that the existence of such a channel was postulated by Birch 1884 on the basis of the literary evidence before the channel itself was physically discovered.

occasions with the coronation, and furthermore the contrast with the king of Assyria in v. 7 suggests that a reference to the king of Judah is most appropriate here.

These latter arguments are not strong. The reference to the king of Assyria belongs to the work of the later glossator, so while it may be invoked in terms of how he understood the passage we should not appeal to that in connection with the original text. In addition, the present passage does not speak of Gihon itself, so that the allusion is indirect at best, and in any case other evidence suggests that the coronation was more normally celebrated in the temple (cf. 2 Kgs 11:12). There was no temple, of course, when Solomon was crowned, and the circumstances in that story suggest that the situation was in any case unusual. When v. 7a originally followed directly after our line, the contrast was between gentle waters and a mighty torrent, the latter apparently referring to more than just the Assyrian king (though he will have been included).

It seems most probable, therefore, that our line spoke originally of God as king of Zion who made gracious provision for his people there—included in which will have been the Davidic king, though he is not the focus of the image. The hope may be expressed in conclusion, however, that the David in whose honor this volume is published may here find equal refreshment.

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On the Toponymy of the Jezreel Valley and Adjacent Plains

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In what follows I present a thorough (but not comprehensive) analysis of the toponymy of the Jezreel Valley (with adjacent plains) highlighting its geopolitical status within the framework of Syro-Palestinian entities.

1. Geopolitical Status within the Levantine Framework

The group of polities of the Levant in the first quarter of the first millennium B.C.E., the period of their formation, stabilization, and independence (i.e., before the final Assyrian domination in 720 B.C.E.) can basically be divided into three longitudinal strips, viz., western, central, and eastern running from north to south. This west-east divide is most salient in Aram-Damascus, which was at the time the most powerful and influential polity. It was situated in the center with its Arabian satellite of Wādi Sirhān in the east-southeast (ruled by Gindibu and subsequently by the queens Zabibe and Samsi, see Eph'al 1982: 82ff.) and the economically significant but politically dependent Phoenicia (notably Tyre) in the west. The same applies to Israel (Northern Kingdom). Taken together with its vassal Judah, one can envisage Israel (when it was not dependent on Aram-Damascus) as the central polity in the southernmost part of the Levant with satellite polities in southern Transjordan (Moab and the structurally heterogeneous chiefdoms of Greater Edom), while commercially significant Philistia in the west resembles Phoenicia in most aspects (economic, ecological, and ethno-linguistic). This geopolitical structure can be partially applied to the kingdom of Hamath as well: Zobah, Lu'aš/Luhuti (and possibly Yasbuqu; from south to north) are east of the core of the kingdom on the fringe of the desert while the coast had several Phoenician "colonies," all dependent on this kingdom. In the same manner, Arpad seems to have the same relationship with Unqi/Patina to the west (where there was a certain Phoenician involvement in maritime trade) and possibly Yasbuqu in the east-southeast. It can be observed, that the western strip, viz., Phoenicia and to some extent Philistia, displays a certain continuity from the Late-Bronze Age, whereas this continuity in the central strip exists in Arpad and Hamath, but not in Aram Damascus and the Northern Kingdom with its satellites, and is entirely absent in the eastern strip.

Author's note: Abbreviations: CA = Classical Arabic; Crus. = Crusader; Enc. Isl. = Encyclopedia of Islam; ESI = Excavations and Surveys in Israel; Eth. = Ethiopic; HA = Hadashot Arkheologiyot; OSyr. = Old Syriac; PEF = Palestine Exploration Fund; Saf. = Safaitic; SWP = Survey of Western Palestine. Other abbreviations are self-evident. Supported by the Yaniv Foundation (Tel Aviv University).

Arameans from the east eventually took over Arpad and Hamath (which was subsequently dominated by a dynasty from Luash). Of course, such a presentation of the geopolitical structure of the Levant in a relatively long period with several political transformations is necessarily very general and inevitably simplified. The picture was certainly more complicated and variegated: for example, Judah, which was (practically if not officially) a satellite of the Northern Kingdom, seems to have controlled from time to time at least parts of Greater Edom. Aram Damascus itself was politically heterogeneous to begin with. In addition, Phoenicia exercised economic and cultural influence not only on Aram Damascus but also on the Northern Kingdom, while Philistia's economic influence on its eastern neighbors seems to be much more limited and its cultural impact was probably negligent. This presentation with its admitted limitations is made here for the sake of transparency.

The geopolitical analysis of the Levantine entities during the period under discussion paid attention to the west-east divide, but neglected the role of the transversal-latitudinal valleys and gaps running from west to east, thereby contributing to a certain extent to a north-south divide. The Syrian provinces (unlike the vassals in Phoenicia-Philistia and Judah who had connections with Egypt and overseas polities) never rebelled against Assyria after 720 B.C.E. The only local political factor in Syria were the nomads on its fringes, notably in Anti-Lebanon and Emesene during the entire period of imperial continuous domination (Donner 1989: 81f.; cf. Zadok 1999: 293f.). The indigenous population preserved its Aramaic dialects and (according to Poseidonios of Apamea) was aware of its Aramean identity. Their preservation of the local cults in the Hellenistic-Roman Age and their embracing of the dissident monophysite Christianity in the Byzantine period are in a way acts of self-definition and passive but effective resistance to the prolonged and changing processes of Hellenism.

The Emesenean gap facilitated the infiltration of the Arabian nomads from Palmyrene westwards, where they challenged the Assyrian and subsequent powers (see Na'aman 1997: 422ff. = 2006: 364ff.; Fales 2002: 137f., 143ff.). The successful penetration of the Arabian tribes highlights the limitations of the *pax Assyriaca*. The Assyrian reaction was influenced and dictated by global imperial needs, unlike the steps of the earlier independent Syro-Palestinian polities, whose actions were guided by local and particular interests. This also applies to the south Transjordanian polities and Judah, which were situated on the fringe of the desert and generally benefited from the *pax Assyriaca*.

The Jezreel Valley separating Galilee from Samaria (in the geomorphological sense and in certain periods also demographically, cf. Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 47; Grossman 1994: 58ff., 72 with maps 4, 5) starts at the Jordan River east of Beth Shean and ends at the mouth of the Kishon. Thus it includes the Beth Shean alluvial plain in the southeast, the Haifa (Zebulun) plain in the northwest, and the Esdraelon proper in the center. This "Greater Esdraelon" is analogous to a limited extent to the Emesenean gap. Both run from east to west. The latter formed a barrier between the heavily Aramaicized Antiochene and Apamene and more southerly regions where the Arabians penetrated during the pre-Islamic periods. Greater

Esdraelon forms a natural border separating Galilee where non-Hebrew dialects were presumably dominant. It should be pointed out that also currently Greater Esdraelon forms the border between the central and the Galilean dialects of modern Palestinian Arabic. It is not known whether Greater Esdraelon played a similar role in the pre-Islamic periods when the region was Canaanite-speaking (presumably at least down to the Achaemenid period) and Aramaic-speaking. It should be mentioned that loss of /ʕ/ was confined to Greater Esdraelon and its fringes (see Elitzur 2004: 175f.).

The Canaanite culture persisted in Jezreel and its valley (see Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 192) after its demise in other regions of central Canaan. Greater Esdraelon borders in the east with the northern Gilead, which was severely depopulated from the end of Iron IIA to the end of the Achaemenid period due to Arabian infiltration (see Mittmann 1970: 246; cf. Knauf 1985: 51f.). The creation of the Decapolis including Scythopolis (Beth Shean) on the eastern border of Greater Esdraelon during the Hellenistic period was part of the imperial response to the Arabian (Nabatean) challenge (Beth Shean had administrative ties with Transjordan also much later: in 1595/6 C.E., it belonged to the ʿAjlūn region, cf. below, 2bβ, 3.1). It is difficult to imagine that the process of Arabian infiltration left no traces on the adjacent valley to the west which is devoid of a natural barrier (the Jordan River is not effectively such). Unfortunately, the evidence for the ethno-linguistic character of Greater Esdraelon in the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods is very scanty (cf. Zadok 1998a: 17*).¹

Nevertheless, at least two toponyms from these periods may be explicable in Arabian terms. (1) *Ṭarbani* < *Ṭrbnt* (Avi-Yonah 1976: 99a; Reeg 1989: 278f.; cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 747:96), which ends with *-an + Vt*, is based on *Ṭ-R-B*, which is productive in the North Arabian anthroponymy, cf. Saf. *Ṭrbʿl* (Littmann 1943: 460a = Lankester Harding 1971: 387; 1x), Arab. *Ṭārib* (Caskel 1966: 556b), to *ṭariba* “to be moved with joy or sadness” (e.g., *ṭarab* “delight”) but also *maṭrab(a^h)* “by-road, narrow road,” which would be more suitable for a toponym. Cf. perhaps *Καφαρορβαν* in Zacharias Rhetor (Ahrens and Krüger 1899: 262), which may originate from *Kpr Ṭwrbn* (OSyr., cf. Beyer 1931: 218, 219 with n. 3: *Ḥirbit ʿAṭrabi*, with a secondary /ʕ/ due to the /t/ and /r/, in view of the earlier form *Aṭraba^h*, Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 148; Avi-Yonah 1976: 47a, s.v. *Caphar Tob II*; Zadok 1995–97: 107). An Aramaic alternative derivation is possible, but seems

1. To the scanty prosopographical material one may add *Αβδαγον* s. of Alexandros from Gaba Hippeon (undated, but datable to the Hellenistic or early Roman period). Isaac 1988 (1998:31ff, especially 34f.) renders this anthroponym as “servant of Dagon” (< **Abd-Dagōn*/ with simplification of *-d-*). Dagon is a West Semitic deity which was worshipped in Philistia (extant in ancient Canaanite toponymy also outside Philistia) and Roman Arvad. This is indeed the only rendering which can be supported by the available onomastic evidence (alternatively “Dagon is <my> father”). However, one would expect a form **Αβδαγονον* (acc. sg. of **Αβδαγονος*). In view of the fact that the Phrygian moon-god frequently appears on coins from Gaba Hippeon (see Kindler 1988, 47f., 50, 52ff., 56f.), one may think of a further possibility, namely that the name may be Phrygian (Kindler 1988, 64f. assumes that a significant component of the population of this military colony were Phrygians), but this cannot be proven due to the residual nature of the Phrygian onomasticon (for a recent *status quaestionis* cf. Innocente 1997).

less likely: Pal. Jewish Aram. *T-R-B* is a rare variant of *T-R-P* (denominative to *trb/p* “leaf,” recorded in the causative stem, Sokoloff 1990: 230, 231f., s.v.). (2) *Kpr* ‘*wtn*’ (Καπαρκοτνει, Avi-Yonah 1976: 74b, s.v. Legio; Reeg 1989: 361f.) possibly contains an Arabian anthroponym (cf. Sima 2001 *ad* OT ‘*tny*’). *Kpr* ‘*wtn*’ was inhabited, at least partly, by Samaritans and was probably one of the northern points of the Samaritan territorial continuum during the Hellenistic-Roman Age whereas Beth Shean and its region—like northern Gilead—was predominantly pagan then. Pagan elements were encouraged by the imperial authorities (Hellenistic and Roman) who kept royal estates in the plain and founded new urban centers for veterans on its fringes. In addition, judging from its designation (*Šryyh*, see Dalman 1923: 34, in order to distinguish it from its Judean homonym; the emendation *Nšryyh* suggested by Neubauer 1868: 189f. and followed by Graetz 1880 is theologically motivated and hence incredible), the settlement of Bethlehem was implicitly a Tyrian possession for a certain time during the Hellenistic Age if not earlier (perhaps as early as the Achaemenid period if analogous to the donation of the territory of Dor and Jaffa by the Achaemenid king to his Sidonian vassal).

2. Toponymic Analysis

a. Introductory remarks

The following treatment of the toponymy is necessarily preliminary and selective. As in other parts of Palestine, the modern toponymy of Greater Esdraelon is predominantly Arabic with a small percentage of pre-Islamic survivals mostly in settlements with a more or less uninterrupted occupation (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: *passim*). Most of these settlements are not situated in the valley itself, but in the adjacent hilly areas. Therefore it is not surprising that this valley was named after urban centers located on the fringe of it, viz., Esdraelon (‘*mq/bq’t* *Yzr’l*, Reeg 1989: 144f.) and Lajjūn (*sahl* ~, with a Hellenistic-Roman forerunner, viz., the great plain of Legio, Avi-Yonah 1976: 75a, top).

Three of its sections are named after small settlements, viz., *bq’t* ‘*kslw*, *bq’t* *Byt š’n* and *bq’t* *Symwny’/h* (Reeg 1989: 137f., 142, 146; cf. perhaps the case of the valley of Gina in the Amarna age, Na’aman 1988: 184f.). Another modern name of the valley is *Marj Ibn/Banī ‘Amr* (Eshtori hap-Parhi: *Mrg Bny ‘mr*; named after a Bedouin tribe). Its central section is part of the settlements of Jenin (*nawâhi Jinīn*, Palmer 1881: 43f.), which are divided into three sub-districts: *Šifat il-ġarbi*, *Šifat il-qibli* and *Šifat iṣ-šimāli* (western, southern, and northern divisions) or named after another Bedouin tribe, Ḥārītā^b: *Bilād Ḥārītīt iṣ-šimāliyyi* (northern) and *Ḥārītīt il-qibliyyi* (southern) = *Mašāriq il-Jarrār*.

The analysis of the toponymy is basically diachronic. Its aim is to contribute towards the creation of a model for evaluating earlier Palestinian microtoponymy (so far only a handful of Old Testament microtoponyms are recorded, e.g., *Bwr hsyryh* and *Nywt bRmh*). The extra-biblical ones refer to locales in Ramat Beth Shemesh: *śdh* plus PN₁ *bn* (“son of”) PN₂ (only two full field names are preserved, J. Naveh *apud* Milevski 2005: 22f.: 1; *śdh* may refer to any arable land). For Palestinian microtoponyms from the Roman period see below, b α *in fine*.

b. Substrate

α. In ancient and medieval sources

The Canaanite-Hebrew substrate is still extant in *Jinīn* (Gyny, Reeg 1989: 180f., for the ending *yy* cf. Kutscher 1976: 43ff.; mentioned in Yāqūt, see al-Hilou 1986: 128; Zadok 1995: 633; Elitzur 2004: 306, 377f.), *Sūlam* (*Sōlam*, EA *Šu-na-a-mu*, OT *Šwnm*, LXX Σουλημ, see Zadok 1995–97: 141; Elitzur 2004: 235, 317; cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 758: 119), *Tʿinnik* (El Amarna *Ta-ah-n[a-k]a*, EA 248, 14, see Belmonte Marín 2001: 281, s.v. **Taʿannaku*; Septuagint Θανααχ, Θανααχ, Τανααχ, Crus. *Taanoc*; see Elitzur 2004: 305; *a > i* after the laryngeal ʿ is due to the local Arabic dialect which has for example *tih̄at* for *tah̄at* “beneath, below”) and *Zirʿīn* < **Zirʿīl* < *Yzrʿl* (cf. Zadok 1995–97: 118f., 141, 158; Elitzur 2004: 26, 184, with *l > n* presumably because of the presence of two liquids/nasals). The latter is with aphaeresis, cf. already Lat. *Stradela* in the *Itinerarium Burdigalense* (Avi Yonah 1976: 70b; cf. Beyer 1944–45: 232). Both *Bēt laḥm* and *ʿĒn Šadūd* (cf. Elitzur 2004: 304; Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 746f.: 94f.) were re-interpreted in Arabic as “the house of meat” (cf. Elitzur 2004: 186) and “spring” plus “strong” respectively. *Maʿlūl* < *Mhlwl* (Avi-Yonah 1976: 77a; Reeg 1989: 397f.; Elitzur 2004: 298 < OT *Nhll* with *n- > m-* due to the presence of another liquid, viz., *l*) was also reinterpreted in Arabic (*maʿlūl* “sick”). Crus. *Maula* (Beyer 1944–45: 233) can render either **Mahlūl* or *Maʿlūl* (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 753: 108). *Sammūniyyi* (actually a mound, cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 750f.: 104) is also ultimately Canaanite (cf. Rainey 1976; Zadok 1995–97: 146, with a Lebanese homonym, Wardini 2002: 253). The name with one *-m-* was transferred to the *qattūl* formation which is more common in Arabic. *Indūr* < *ʿIndūr* (1595/6 C.E., see below, β, 1.1) < OT *ʿyn dwr* (with ʿ > ʾ, see Elitzur 2004: 174f.: 42, cf. Kutscher 1976: 79f, 86ff.), *Bēsān* < *Baysān* < *Byšn* < *Byt šʾn* (cf. Elitzur 2004: 108, 115, 298, 303; *Ksāl* (also Yāqūt; > *Iksāl*, see al-Hilou 1986: 43; Elitzur 2004: 160ff.: 36; cf. Beyer 1944–45: 244, n. 4) < **kslw* < OT *Kslwt* (Reeg 1989: 42), *Getta* and *Gaba* (see Schmitt 1987: 44 and *passim*).

A special case seems to be *Lidd il-ʿAwāḏīn* (named after the local Bedouin tribe). The tribal name was added in order to distinguish this settlement from its famous homonym (*Lidd* = Lydda, cf. Elitzur 2004: 306f.). However, doubt is cast on the antiquity of the application of the name to this site (which is not mentioned in any pre-modern source) in view of the fact that the modern toponymy of the region is not devoid of metonymy. Such are the cases of *il-Baṭṭūf* (a plot near Iksāl named after the famous and fertile basin) and Ḥallit *Ḥēfa* between il-Lajjūn and il-Kafrīn named after the famous city (for ancient vestiges see Condor and Kitchener 1882: 66; Raban 1975; Berman 1989; and Covello-Paran 2006: Chalcolithic, EB, late Roman–early Byzantine). *Tall Qāmūn* (for *Qēmūn*, medieval *Qaymūn* of Yāqūt, Crus. *Caimun*, Beyer 1944–45: 240f.) < Καμμωνά/*Cimona* (Avi-Yonah 1976: 50a, see al-Hilou 1986: 308 with lit.; Elitzur 2004: 177, 297 with n. 6, 358f.). Crus. *Caymont* and *Cain Mons* on the map of Jacotin are due to popular etymology.

The later Aramaic substrate is extant in *Pacida* (Abel 1967, 1: 467); *Jbāta* (< *Gbt*/Γαβαθα, see Elitzur 2004: 177, 297), *Ja/injār* (< *Gngr*, see Reeg 1989:428), *Nēn* < pre-

Islamic *Nʿym* (Ναυμ/ν etc., Reeg 1989: 442f.; Crus. *Naym/n*, Beyer 1944–45: 218) “pleasant” (with ʿ > ʾ, cf. Kutscher 1976: 79f., 86ff.; Elitzur 2004: 87, 177, 297) and possibly (Mutatio) *Calamon* (Tall abū ḥawwām, see Schmitt 1987: 44). *Ḥirbit Ṭabʿūn* (Kh. Tubʿaʿūn on the PEF map). *Ṭwbnyʿ*, Yāqūt *aṭ-Tūbāniyya*^h, Crus. *Tubanie* (cf. al-Hilou 1986: 243f.), *Ṭawbēnī* (Eshtori hap-Parhi, *Kptwr wprh*, ed. Luncz 1899, 291,² see Klein 1910: 21) is presumably modern *ʿĒn Ṭabʿūn* (cf. Crus. *Fons Tubania*, see Reeg 1989: 277f.). Is the latter’s /ʿ/ due to Arabic reinterpretation? *Šaṭṭa* is thought to be a survival of OT *Byt hšṭh* (“the place of the acacia”). Alternatively it may originate from Jewish Pal. Aram. *šyṭh* “row, line” (see Zadok 1995–97: 152 with n. 26). The difficulty with both etymologies is the sibilant as Palestinian Arabic has generally /s/ for Heb.Aram. /š/ in toponyms (cf. Elitzur 2004: 110, 303). Perhaps *Šaṭṭa* can be one of the few exceptional cases where ancient /š/ is rendered by /s/ in the vernacular, as is the case in Lebanon and exceptionally in Galilee (e.g., *Hōšī* and *Šafāʿamr*, cf. Elitzur 2004: 111, the former is written with h- as early as the 14th century C.E.: Eshtori hap-Parhi, *Kptwr wprh*, ed. Luncz 1899, 291, has *Hwšʿ*). For implicit survivals see below, d, 1.1a; 1.2a; 1.3a; 2.0.

Ενθενανηθ < ʿyn *tmny* “the spring of eight” (? see Avi-Yonah 1976: 56a). Plot names like *ir-Riḥāb* make the impression that they are the ultimate form of the ancient survival (Old Testament *Rḥwb*). However, it cannot be excluded that *ir-Riḥāb* is a fairly modern back-formation originating from *iš-šēḥ Riḥāb* (below, 2.12d), which is the true preserver of the ancient toponym undergoing a process of islamization. There are more pertinent examples for such secondary designations of plot names situated near ancient mounds or on watercourses; they are generally preceded by the Arabic definite article. The inscription from the Rehob synagogue in the Beth Shean alluvium allows a rare glimpse in the urban and suburban microtoponymy from the Roman period. It lists in addition to the Flurname *ḥqlh ḥywrth* “white (= grain) field,” the names of four gates of the city of Beth Shean, all preceded by *pyly* < Greek πύλη “gate” + Aram. *d* “of,” viz., *Zyryh* “(olive) press tub,” *Skwth* “unctuarium” (see Sokoloff 1990: 175b, 376b), *Zblyyh* “refuse, garbage” and *ʿgmʿ* “swamp” (see Sussmann 1974: 115f. *ad loc.*; cf. Nir 1989: 86). These hybrid compound microtoponyms reveal a high degree of Aramaic-Greek linguistic interference.

β. *In 1595/6 C.E.*

The Jezreel Valley and adjacent plains belonged to three Ottoman administrative regions (sg. *liwāʿ* = *sanjaq*) including six sub-regions (sg. *nāḥiya*^h) then.

1. *Liwāʿ Lajjūn* (formerly Marj Ibn ʿĀmir, see Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 18f., 157ff.)

In 1595/6 C.E. *Lajjūn* (*il-Lajjūn* < *Legio*, cf. al-Hilou 1986: 330; Zadok 1995–97: 146), which included large military fiefs, was the least populated and the only purely Muslim *liwāʿ* in Palestine (including Transjordan). Later on (up to the early 20th century C.E.) it was even less populated (see Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 43ff., 50, 54, 57: Fig. 7, 99, 103). The relatively weak cultural continuity and the

2. Presumably for /**Tōbāni*/; for the rendering with <ē> cf. *Sawlem* for *Sūlam* in the same source, i.e., with lowering of /a/ (an *imāla*).

fact that a considerable percentage of the population were late comers (Bedouins) might have diminished the preservation of the ancient toponymy.

1.1. *Nāḥiya^h Šafā* (presumably “hill [country],” cf. Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 30: Fig. 3)

All the settlements were on the hills (Ramat Issachar), except for Sūlam, Nayn (> Nēn), ‘Indūr (‘īdūr), and Qabāṭiyya^h (> Qabāṭyi) which are on the fringes of the valley.

1.2. *Nāḥiya^h Sāḥil ‘Atlīt* (including Mt. Karmel)

The occurrence of *al-Ḥārīṭiyya^h* as early as the 13th century C.E. (see Barag 1979: 204) and the related encampment A‘rāb Banī Ḥārīṭa^h in 1595/6 C.E. in the same list as *Jabāsuwār* (= Gaba Hippeon, see Zadok 2004: 324) rules out the localization of Gaba Hippeon in Ḥirbit *il-Ḥārīṭiyyi* and can be considered a final proof for the identification of Gaba Hippeon with Tall Abū šūši as suggested by Siegelmann 1984 (followed by Schmitt 1987, *pace* Dvorjetski 2009: 22, 34). There is good reason for thinking that the later settlement of *Jabāsuwār* is the ancient name of the village of Abū šūši (cf. Safrai and Linn 1993), just like the homonymous village near Ramli replaced in the 19th century C.E. the ancient name Gezer (still extant in *il-Jazari*, the *nisbe* of the local *wili*, cf. Elitzur 2004: 369). Tall Abū šūši has Ottoman remains according to Raban 1999: 61*: 72. Linn 1988: 220 draws attention to the fact that the name Gaba Hippeon appears on two maps of Terra Sancta between Jokneam and Megiddo (provided it is not copied from the ancient literary sources). The absence of *Jabāsuwār* from the source concerning the ultimate borders of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (based on a treaty, Barag 1979) is understandable only if it is not located in Ḥirbit *il-Ḥārīṭiyyi* but more to the south, i.e., in Abū šūši, which certainly was outside the region covered by the medieval treaty. The first component of *Jabā(-)suwār* goes back to **Gab*‘ with loss of ‘ (cf. Kutscher 1976: 79f, 86ff.), but this may be an audial mistake in view of *Jabā* for *Jaba*‘ on the western slope of Mt. Carmel in the same source (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 158).

Ġubayya^h is mentioned in the same source from 1595/6 C.E. (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 157). It is a purely Arabic name (see below, 2.5a) and not a reminiscence of Canannite *Gaba*‘ (*pace* Schmitt 1987: 39f.; a perusal of maps of 1:20.000 reveals that *Ġābi* is a common Palestinian microtoponym). *Ji‘āra* (with a mound, see Raban 1999: 71*: 104) in Bilād ir-Rūḥa has a homonym in Syria (Jabal Ḥass). It derives from *G*-‘-*R* “to rebuke” (Heb., Old Syr.; Eth. “to cry out”; also in Sabaic), Arab. “to bellow, roar” (bovines); Syro-Pal. Arab. “to sing strongly and badly” (cf. *Ḥirbit Ja‘āra* northwest of ‘Ajjūr, *Wādi l-ja‘ār* east of ‘Innābi, *Ḥawākir il-ja‘ār* near Dēr id-dibbān and Qanāt *il-ja‘ār*, 2.12 below). This village was inhabited by Muslims (see al-Dabbāġ 1962–, 7/2: 673) as early as 1595/6 C.E. (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 158: *Ji‘āra^h* with only four households and bachelors), but preserved a microtoponym *Barbara* (to the east, a Christian female saint, in all probability a pre-1595 toponym) and *Ḥallit in-Nuṣrāni* “the dell of the Christian.” The possibility that it is named after a Christian *effendi* from the Ottoman period is not excluded.

1.3. *Nāḥiya^h Ša‘rā*

Sālim, *T‘inniq*, *Zabda^h*.

1.4. *Nāḥiya^h Jinīn*

‘*Urbān Marj Ibn ‘Āmir*, the only specified Bedouin tribe living in Marj Ibn ‘Āmir being *Munjid wa Ḥajīr*; *Ḥarnūba^h* (modern *Ḥirbit il-Ḥarrūbi* “the ruin of the carob tree,” cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 745: 91); ‘*Āba^h* (modern *Ḥirbit ‘Ābi*, see Zadok 1995–97: 148); *Jalama^h*, *Zir‘ūn* (hypercorrect for *Zir‘īn*). *Nūris* (< **Nūr-Esi*) “Esi (Isis) is (my) light,” cf. *‘Ibdīs* (near Negba) < **Abd-Esi* “Isis’ servant” (Zadok 1985: 393, n. 105). Semitic anthroponyms with the theophorous element Isis are recorded in Phoenicia and Samaria, cf., e.g., ‘*sytn* (starts with Isis, Zadok 1998b: 782: 31). Both are recorded as early as the Crusader’s period (*Noriz*, *Nurith*, *Norrit*, and *Habde* resp., the plene spelling ‘*Ibdīs* in 1595/6 C.E., Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 149, bottom is secondary), but they must have been coined sometime between 720 B.C.E., and 350 C.E. The former is exclusively Aramaic and the latter is also explicable in Aramaic terms. Therefore they cannot predate the period of the Assyrian rule in Palestine when Aramaic started to replace Canaanite-Hebrew as the vernacular. Names with pagan theophorous elements ceased to be productive in the Palestinian toponymy after the beginning of the Byzantine period. For ancient remains in *Nūris*, see Syon 1994.

2. *Liwā’ Šafād*

2.1. *Nāḥiya^h Ṭabariyya^h* (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 187ff.)

Ksāl; *Mujaydil* (> *Mjēdil* “little *Majdal*,” cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 752: 107); *Bayt laḥm*; *Ma‘lūl*.

3. *Liwā’ ‘Ajlūn*

3.1. *Nāḥiya^h Ġawr* (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 168)

Baysān (> *Bēsān*), (*Dayr*) *Radġa^h* (modern *Radġa*, see Elitzur 2004: 180 with n. 6). *Farwānah* > *Farwāni* is apparently based on *farwa*, *farwa^h* “white (untilled) soil” (cf. al-Ma‘ani 1992: 163: 299). A connection of *Farwāni* with *furn* “oven” (due to its extreme heat) suggested by al-Dabbāġ 1962–, 6/2: 504, is unlikely. For *Zarrā‘a^h* see below, 2.0.

c. *Arabic superstrate from the middle ages to 1872 C.E.*

Bīr el Beidar (Crus. *Bedar*, see Beyer 1944–45: 209 with n. 6) /*Bīr il-bēdar*/ “the well of the threshing floor” (cf. Zadok 1995–97: 124, modern *Ḥirbit* ~); *Tell el Fār* /*il-fār*/ “the mound of the mouse” (attested as early as the 13th century C.E., poss. Crus. *Farah*, see Beyer 1944–45: 210; Barag 1979: 205; for a homonym see *Tall il-‘adas*). *Tall al-naḥl* “the mound of the bees” (for bee hives see Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 72; but possibly < Aram. *nḥl* “valley; creek” with an Arabic reinterpretation; attested in the 13th century C.E., see Barag 1979: 205); *el Harbaj* (perhaps attested as early as the 13th century C.E., see Barag 1979: 205), cf. *Tall* (and *Ḥirbit*) *Harbaj* /*il-Harbaj*/ “hole dug in the ground for collecting the rain water” (Dalman 1928–42, 1/1: 71, 4; *harbaj* “to tear,” e.g., a garment, or “to scratch, scrape” [e.g., the skin] is semantically less likely; the rendering “badly done work,” suggested by Palmer 1881: 109, is hardly applicable). These four toponyms appear on the PEF map (sheet V). *Maṣūra*: *al-Manṣūra^h* is recorded as early as the 13th century C.E., and *Arḍ al-Zar(r)ā‘a^h* as early as the Crusader period (see Barag 1979: 204, 213, n. 56). *Rīḥāna^h*

(modern *Ḥirbit ir-Rihāniyyi*) and *Ḥirbit Ḥusayniyya*^h are recorded in 1595/6 C.E. (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 161, 167).

d. Modern toponymy (1872–1948)

The overwhelming majority of these toponyms are Arabic, thereby forming most of the superstrate. The few ancient survivals (partially hybrid, i.e., including Arabic components with non-Arabic *nuclei*) belong to the Canaanite-Aramaic substrate and in one case to the Crusader adstrate. Many toponyms are homonymous with other places in the Levant. However, the numerous homonymous microtoponyms from other parts of the land of Israel cannot be discussed within the limited framework of this paper, but must be left to a comprehensive treatise of the microtoponymy of Israel and Palestine.

The modern toponymy is of interest also for the economic history of the region. For instance, it reveals that rice was grown and water buffaloes were raised in swampy areas of the Jezreel Valley (basically by non-Arab elements, notably Kurdish and Turkmen tribesmen; for a possible allusion to a Kurdish tribe in the Beth Shean alluvium cf. below, 2.11). Both are not recorded in the *liwāʾ Lajjūn* in 1595/6 C.E., but were confined to the Beth Shean alluvium (which is also part of the Jordan Valley, CA *Ġawr* > colloquial *Ġōr*) and the wet plains of the Mediterranean coast (cf. Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 72, 83, 85; later also in the Hula Valley). A common component of microtoponyms of the Jezreel Valley (rare in the surrounding hill country) is *Jazīra* (pl. *Jazāyir*, *juzr*) “island/peninsula” for plots situated between wadis. On the other hand, *Waʾr(a)* “place with rugged, stony ground” refers to areas on the fringes of the plain. The analysis presented below contains some stray remarks on locales situated on the hill country around Greater Esdraelon.

1. *The toponyms recorded in 1872–1877 C.E.*

(*Survey of Western Palestine, published 1880–1884*)

1.1. PEF map, Sheet V

(interpretations generally follow Palmer 1881: 105–20)³

a. Survivals (partially at least with an ancient nucleus)

Zebdah /*Zabdi*/ (el ʾAlāly in order to distinguish it from homonymous toponyms). Bîr ed Dustrah /*Bîr id-dustra*/ “the well of the narrow pass” (< Old French, coined in the Crusader period like its quasi-homonym *Dustri* near Atlît). *Ḥirbit Zabid*; Tell Qiri, Ein *Qīra* (/Qīri/, Chateau d’El-Kireh on the Jacotin map) with a homonym in Samaria (cf. Zadok 1995–97: 148f.); Jeida / *Jēda* ~ *Jīda*/ (cf. Zadok 1995–97: 148, despite Palmer 1881: 109) and Yâjûr /*Yajûr*/ < *Ygwr*, homonymous with a biblical settlement in the Negeb district of Judah (see Zadok 1995–97: 155: 2.2.67).

b. Arabic (devoid of ancient survivals)

El Abhariyeh /*il-Abhariyyi*/ “*styrax officinalis*”. ‘Ain /‘Ēn/ “spring” precedes Atâruk (cf. below, 2.5, o), el ʾAleik /*li-ʿlēq*/ “of the brambles,” el Ghufr /*il-ġafr*/ “of the escort or toll,” Hamîdeh /*Ḥamīdi*/ “of H,” Kabweh /*qabwi*/ “of a little vault or cellar”

3. Palmer 1881: 115 has “Rakhtīyeh” (*recte Ruqṭiyyi*); cf. *ruqṭi* “turtledove” with *t* > *ṭ* due to the *q*; Dalman 1928–42 6:78).

(diminutive of *qabu*), el Mudaûwarah /*li-mdawwara*/ “the round spring,” and esh Sheikha /*iš-šēḥa*/ “of the sheikha”; ‘Ayun el ‘Afy /*‘yūn il-‘āfi*/ “the springs of the water-drawer.” Ashlûl el Wawy /*šlûl il-wāwi*/ “cascades of the jackal.”

(Kh.) El Hârithîya /*Ḥirbit il-Ḥârithiyyi*/ (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 727: 43) is interpreted as “the ploughed land” by Palmer (cf. El Harte), but it is rather a *nisbe* of a Bedouin clan in view of the presence of the *A‘rāb Banī Ḥâritha*^h in the western section of the valley in 1595/6 C.E. (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 158). Moreover, *al-Ḥârithiyya*^h is recorded as early as the 13th century C.E. (see Barag 1979: 204, cf. above, b, c). Therefore the occurrence of this Arab tribal name cannot be connected with OT *Hršt hgwyyim* (despite Schmitt 1987: 45f. with n. 81): this tribal name is added to that of Sîli (*Sîlit il-Ḥârithiyyi*) in order to distinguish it from the homonymous village (*Sîlit iz-zahr*).

Hashûreh /*il-Ḥašûra*/ (also preceded by umm /*imm*/ “mother”) is related to Ein el-Mahshurah /*‘Ēn il-maḥšûra*/ “the spring of the pressed, tightened, squeezed (terrain)” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 714: 13). Huwarah, Ein el-Hawwara /*Ḥawwāra*/ (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 733: 57) “the white mare” (cf. Zadok 1995–97: 143) rather “(the spring of) the white land, marl.” Khurbet (Kh., /*Ḥirbit*/ “ruin of”) is followed by el ‘Asâfneh /*il-‘Asâfni*/ “the inhabitants of ‘Asifya”; el Beida /*Ḥirbit il-bēda*/ “the white ruin”; el Bîr /*il-bîr*/ “of the well”, cf. *Ḥirbit bîr il-bēda* “the ruin of the white well”; Musrarah /*mušrāra*/ “of the ground full of pebbles, flints” (cf. Dalman 1928–42, 2: 17, 10; Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 728f.: 47, 52); Kh./Tell el Khudeirah /*Ḥirbit (or Tall) li-ḥḍēra*/ “the ruin/mound of the little green patch” (cf. 2.4 below); Kh. Esh Sheikh Is-haq /*Ḥirbit iš-šēḥ Ishāq*/ “the ruin of Sheikh I,” el Is-hakîyeh /*il-Ishāqiyyi*/ (determinate *nisbe* of Isaac) and nearby ‘Ain Is-hak /*‘Ēn Ishāq*/ “the spring of I” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 727: 44); Umm el-Amed /*Imm il-‘amad*/ “mother of (= possessing) the columns” (for this usage of *abū* and *imm* see al-Ma‘ani 1992: 73); Jelamet el Mansurah /*Jalamit il-Manšûra*/ “*Jalami* (‘hill,’ see Elitzur 2004: 179, with many homonyms) of M.” (*al-Manšûra*^h is recorded as early as the 13th century C.E., see above, c).

Kuskus /*Quşqūş*/ “mincemeat,” cf. the pl. (diminutive) *Qsēqīş* (*Ḥirbit* ~ near Iqrit). el Matba‘ /*il-Maṭba‘*/, cf. *maṭba‘a* “site where the blending of manuring (flat cakes) takes place (in order to be dried,” Dalman 1928–42, 4: 19, 22). M(u)gh(ara)t el Jehannam /*Mġārit il-jahannam*/ “the cave of hell”; Mght es Sih /*Mġārit is-sīh*/ “the cave of the cistern.” Nahr el Mukutta‘ /*Nahr li-Mqatta‘*/ “the broken, infirm river.” Sheikh Abreik, Kh. Esh-Sh. Bureik /*iš-šēḥ Brēk*/, diminutive of *B-R-K* “to bless.” Tell el Aly /*Tall il-‘ali*/ “the high mound” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 726: 42); Tell /*Tall*/ “mound” precedes Abu Hawwām /*abū ḥawwām*/ “of the (= possessing) flocks of wild fowl”; Ghaltah /*ġalta*/ “of the mistake”; el Kussîs /*il-qassîs*/ “of the Christian priest” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 725: 40; 732: 54); el Muwâjeh /*li-mwāji*/ “the facing mound”; es Semn /*is-samn*/ “of the butter”; esh Shemmâm /*iš-šammām*/ “of the melon” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 730: 49); Wa‘r /*il-wa‘r*/ “of the place with rugged, stony ground.”

1.2. PEF map, Sheet VIII

(interpretations generally follow Palmer 1881: 142–56)

a. *Survivals*

El ‘Afûleh (‘Affûle on a German map) /il-‘Af(f)ûli/ (see Palmer 1881: 142; cf. Zadok 1995–97: 145; cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 747f.: 97); Bîr Rāba /Bîr Rāba/ “the well of Rāba” (homonymous with a village in northeastern Samaria); El Kufeireh, Kufeira /li-Kfēri/ “little *Kafra*.” Ezbûba /Zbûbi/ may be based on Can.-Heb. *zbwb* “fly” and is hardly related to Arab. *zabîb* “raisin” or *dabûb* “dried up” (pace Palmer 1881: 146). Tell Thorah /Tall tōra/ is either Aramaic (*twr*’) or Arabic (< *ṭawrah*’) “the mound of the bull (Aram.)/mob (Arab.)” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 720: 29).

b. *Arabic* (devoid of ancient survivals)

Abu Shûsheh, Tell Abu Shusheh /(Tall) abū šūši/ “the father of (= possessing) a tuft” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 717: 22). ‘Ain/Tell Abu Zureiq /‘Ēn (or Tall) Abū zrēq/ “the spring/mound of the magpie” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 716: 19; actually named after the village of Abū zrēq); ‘Ain /‘Ēn/ “spring” precedes Bertah /barti/ “of Berta” (also a mound); ed Dalieh /id-dālyi/ “of the trailed vine”; el Fûwâr /il-fûwâr/ “of the source gushing, flowing from great depth” (cf. Wild 1973: 139); el Qubba /il-qubbi/ “of the dome”; er Ruzz /ir-rizz/ “of the rice” (an indication of a small-scale rice growing by Turkoman settlers in the 19th century C.E., cf. Raban 1999: 82*: 142); Ayûn el Farth /‘yûn il-fart/ “the springs of the filth”; Ayûn el Mansi /‘yûn il-Mansi/ “the springs of M. (the forgotten one)” (or < Latin *mansio* “estate”? cf. below, 2.5b). El Bârid /il-Bârid/ “the cold.” El Baten /il-Baṭn/, Baten es Sama /Baṭn is-samā/ “the watercourse (or rugged ground < ‘inside’ or ‘belly’) of the sky.” Buseilah /Bṣēli/ is a diminutive of *baṣali*, *nomen unitatis* of *baṣal* “onion.” Ikhneifis (a ruined tower) /Ḥnēfis/ “little beetle” (name of a prominent Druze clan from Shefaram). Juweidireh /Jwēdra/ “the stone sheep pen” (= *Jadûra*, below, 2d, 2.0; cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 744: 89). Kh. Abu Amir /Ḥirbit abū ‘Āmir/ “the ruin of A.’s father.” Mukeyble (il-M., /im-)Mqēbli/ means on the face of it “the front place,” but actually named after a local clan, viz. “(place of) the *Muqbil* clan” (al-Dabbāġ 1962–, 3/2: 200f.; cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 744f.: 90). Its Lebanese homonym is also named after a homonymous local clan (*Māqbāl*, see Wardini 2002: 233a, 428b). Tell /Tall/ “mound” precedes Abu Qudeis /Abū Qdēs/ (diminutive of *Quds*; cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 742: 84); el Aghbariyeh /il-Aġbāriyyi/ (> /-Iġbāriyyi/) “dust covered” > “wolves” (*nisbe*, a tribal name; another name: *Naġnaġiyyi*, cf. below, 2.5); ed Dhab /id-dahab/ “of the gold” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 743: 85); el Mutesellim /il-mutasallim/ “of the governor.” el Warakâny /il-Waraqāni/ “the leafy” is actually the surname of the local sheikh Mḥammad il-W., who is buried there.

1.3. PEF map, Sheet IX (interpretations generally follow Palmer 1881: 157–72)

a. *Survivals*

El Fule, al-Fūla^h /*il-Fūli*/ (Crusader *Elful/Ehul*, and translated as *Fabe*, *Castrum Fabe*, *La feve*), *nomen unitatis* of *fūl* “broad beans” (see al-Hilou 1986: 288; cf. Zadok 1995–97: 149f.; cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 749: 100); Kh. Beit Ilfa /*Ḥirbit Bēt Ilfa*/ “the ruin of Ilfa’s place” (named after a hypothetical eponym ‘*lp*’; the initial vowel may be either original or the outcome of *a-* as the shift *a > i* is common in the local Arabic dialect); Kh. Tūnis /*Ḥirbit Tūnis*/ “the ruin of Ṭ.” (to Ṭ-N-S “very dark” according to Palmer 1881: 163, but perhaps a corruption of *Antonius*). Kumieh /*Qūmyi*/ < Gk. κώμη “village” (Wild 1977: 72); Tell el Ferr /*Tall il-firr*/ “the mound of the quail” (also named *Kafr il-firr*). Watā’ el Jâlûd /*Waṭa il-Jalûd*/ “the lowland of J.,” ‘Ain Jâlûd /*‘Ēn Jalûd*/ (see below, 2.0).

b. *Arabic* (devoid of ancient survivals)

Springs (preceded by ‘Ain /*‘ēn*): ‘el Baz /*il-bāz*/ “of the hawk”; el Madûa^ç, *recte* /*il-Maddû’*/, Eshtori hap-Parhi, *Kptwr wprh*, ed. Luncz 1899, 291: *Myd’h* (cf. below, 2.12a); Meyiteh /*il-mayyiti*/ “the dead spring” (see below, 2.10); el Rihânîyeh /*ir-Rihāniyyi*/ (see below, 2.10c); ‘Ain/Tell el Beida /*‘Ēn* (or *Tall*) *il-bēda*/ “the white spring/ mound” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 715: 17); ‘Ayûn Bîr el Hufiyyîr /*‘yûn Bîr li-ḥfayyir*/ “the springs of the well of excavation,” Wâdi el Hufiyyîr /*Wādi li-ḥfayyir*/ “the valley of the excavation”; ‘Ayûn eth Th’aleb /*‘yûn iṭ-ṭa’lab*/ “the springs of the fox.” Basset el Mandesi /*Baṣṣit il-Mandassi*/ “the swamp of M.” (corrupted according to Palmer 1881: 160, but cf. *il-Mindassi* adjacent to *il-Baṣṣi* near *il-Kafrîn*, *il-Mundassi* near *Tall il-mutasallim* and *il-Mandassi* near *Wādi l-qilt*, Palmer 1881: 346: El Mandesi, perhaps to *nadasa* “throw down”). Bîr es Suweid /*Bîr is-Swēd*/ “the well of Swēd” (PN with a diminutive form meaning “the black one”). *Jalami* “hill” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 745: 91 and 1.1 above). Jô-sak (‘Ain el ~, see below, 2.11). Kana’t es Sokhny /*Qannāt is-Saḥni*/ “the canal of the Saḥni spring” (“hot,” cf. al-Hilou 1986: 202, see below, 2.11); Kanat Tell esh Shôk /*Qanāt Tall iṣ-šôk*/ “the canal of the mound of the thorns”; more canals (*Qanāt*) are listed in Palmer 1881: 161, bottom (mostly in the Beth Shean alluvium, cf. below, 2.11–12). (Wâdy) El Kantarah /*(Wādi) l-qanṭara*/ “the (valley of the) arch, arcade” (cf. *Qanāt il-Qanṭara* “the canal of the arch, arcade”). Kh. ‘Ain es Sufsaḥ /*Ḥirbit ‘Ēn iṣ-saḥṣāfi*/ “the ruin of the spring of the osier willow”; Kh. Bîr Tibis /*Ḥirbit Bîr ṭibas*/ “the ruin of the plastered well” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 758: 120); Kh. Umm Ghawâdy /*Ḥirbit Imm ġawādi*/ “the ruin of the mother of (= possessing) those who sally forth in the morning” or *imm ir-rāyāt* “the mother of (= possessing) standards” (Palmer 1881: 161; also named *Bîr Iksāl*). Sundela /*Ṣandali*/ (without pre-Islamic remains, see Mokary 2008) “sandal-wood” (perhaps as *nomen unitatis*) or “skiff; pharmacy,” but all of these etymologies, although morphologically impeccable, are semantically difficult as they hardly fit a small and relatively new village far away from the sea and urban culture. “(wild) mint” seems more likely, but there is no proof that this word was in use in Syro-Palestinian Arabic; “hematite” is out of place here (both meanings, as well as others, are recorded in CA

according to Dozy 1881: 846a). The rendering “thick-headed; stool” (Palmer 1881: 167) is also doubtful. The ubiquitous Esh Sheikh Muhammad /iš-šēḥ Mḥammad/ appears also here.

Mounds: el mastabah /il-maṣṭabi/ “of the bench” (near the plot *il-Maṣṭabi*); Nim-rûd /Nimrûd/ “of N.” (cf. the mandatory map of 1:20.000 of Jisr esh Sh. Husein) near *Tall il-madrasi* and *Tall il-ḥamîr*; see al-Dabbāg 1962–, 6: 495), i.e., “of the school” and “of the donkeys” resp.; es Sārem /iṣ-ṣārim/ “of the severe (one)”; esh Sheikh Dâ’ûd /iš-šēḥ Dawûd/ “of Sheikh Daud”; esh Shukf /iš-ṣaqf/ “of the cleft” (cf. below, 2.12); Tell/Wâdi el Khaneizîr /*Tall* (or *Wâdi*) *li-ḥnēzîr*/ “the mound/valley of the little pig” (and the nearby plot of /*li-ḥnēzîr*/). Tellûl el Jehash /*Tlûl li-jḥāš*/ (later *Tall* ~, cf. *Môqi Tall li-jḥāš*) “the donkeys’ mound(s)”; Tellûl ez Zahra /*Tlûl iz-zahra*/ “the mounds of the flower” (or of fine flour, cf. Dalman 1928–42, 3: 289, cf. below, 2.11f).

Watermills (cf. Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 32f., 72; each preceded by Ṭaḥûnet /*Ṭaḥûnit*/ “watermill of”; they do not recur on the mandatory maps as they were not in use any longer due to the introduction of modern methods of grinding): el Jisr /il-jisr/ (“of the bridge”); el Khurbeh /il-ḥirbi/ (“of the ruin”); el Mâlḥah /il-mâlḥa/ (“the salty”; cf. *Tall il-mâlḥa* “the mound of M.” near Beth Shean and the area of *il-Mâlḥa*); el Kôsi /il-Qôsi/ (“of Q, presumably related to *qaws* “bow,” but the rendering of Palmer 1881: 168 is inaccurate as “bowman” would be *qawwās*); er Râs /ir-râs/ (“of the head [= hill]”); es Sâkhny /is-Saḥni/ (“of S. = the hot [spring]”); esh Sheikh /iš-šēḥ/ (“of the sheikh”); esh Sheikh Ibrahîm /iš-šēḥ Ibrahîm/ (“of Sheikh I.”); Weibedeh /wēbidi/ (“of the mountain pass”).

Valleys (preceded by wâdy /wâdi/): Abu Hadideh /*abū ḥadîdi*/ “of the father of (= possessing) a piece of iron”; ‘Ayûn el Kahel /‘yûn il-kaḥl/ “of the springs of manganese”; el ‘Ayn /l-‘ēn/ “of the spring”; el Asmar /l-asmar/ “the brown, dark”; el Harriyeh /l-ḥarriyyi/ “of soft sandy soil”; el Khuzneh (and el Khuzneh) /(*i*)l-ḥazni/ “(of) the treasure” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006:723f.:36); el Judîd /li-jdîd/ “the new”; el Kaleily (and Jabal el K.) /*Jabal il-qalēli*/ “the mountain with the peaks”; er Riml /r-raml/ “of the sand”; es Sidr /s-sidr/ “of the lote (*Zyziphus lotus*) trees”; esh Shu’aleh /š-šu’li/ “of the flame”; Sâbir /ṣābir/ “of the patient one”; esh Sherrâr /š-šarrâr/.

1.4. PEF map, Sheet XII

(interpretations generally follow Palmer 1881: 197–212)

Springs (preceded by ‘Ayn /‘Ēn/): er Ridgha /ir-Ridḡa/ “mud, clay” (< CA *radḡa*); Umm Teiyuneh /*Imm ṭayyûni*/ “the mother of (= possessing) *Linula viscosa*” (*nomen unitatis*), Kûr’an /*Qur‘ān*/ “gourds” and esh Shamsiyeh /iš-Šamsiyyi/ “the sunny.”

2. The period of the British mandate

(1918–1948; *Palestine maps of 1:20.000 series*)

2.0. Introductory remarks

The microtoponymical coverage varies from map to map even within the same series. Combinations of the same element (ground words followed by the same word), referring to a certain area, are registered first. The rendering of ground words

(as compared with the conventions of the British maps) generally follows that of 1 above, e.g., Ein = 'Ēn, Khallat = Ḥallit, Khirbet = Ḥirbit, Seil = Sēl, Tell = Tall, Umm = Imm and Uyun = 'yūn. The same applies to the contracted diphthongs viz., ei /ē/ and aw /ō/. The definite article el is rendered /il/ (/li/ before a consonant cluster, just *l* when the former component ends in *i*, e.g., *Wādi l-ʿēn*) and short *e* is generally written /i/. The diminutive formation *fuʿail* (/qutayl/) is given as /qtēl/ below. Regarding other nominal formations, their short unstressed vowels are also omitted (e.g., *jadīd* /jdīd/). In general the remaining phonetic renderings presented below are self evident and their referents can easily be found on the maps. Survivals (all implicit with various degrees of plausibility) are:

ʿĒn/ʿyūn *Qāmūn* (on 2.4; see above, b, a); presumably *Ḥirbit Bsēmi* (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 728: 46; the nearby land is named *Ḥirbit Bēsūmi*, see below, 2.4) and *il-Jurn* “the threshing floor” (on 2.3; less likely “the mortar,” see Wild 1973: 308). *iz-Zarrāʿa* (on 2.3, *Arḍ al-Zar(r)āʿa*^h is recorded as early as the Crusader period, see Barag 1979: 213, n. 56) < Aram. “procreator” (see Zadok 1995–97: 144; with a homonym south of of Beth Shean). Presumably *Ḥirbit Jadūra* and *Ḥirbit Zābid* (on 2.8). *Nahr/Qanāt/Sēl/Wādi/Waṭa il-Jalūd* (on 2.10, 2.11; < **Jalūd*? in which case it may originate from *Gīd*, see Elitzur 2004: 177,⁴ cf. Yahalom 2001). The form *Jalūt* is secondary, being inspired by Islamic tradition (the Quranic rendering of Goliath). *Jālūd/t* is recorded as early as the Middle Ages (see al-Hilou 1986: 122, 274, Crus. *Geluth*, *Jeluf*, Beyer 1944–45: 220 with n. 9); cf. 2.2 below.

2.1. *Haifa*

a. *Tall/Ḥirbit Harbaj* (cf. above, c).

Arḍ il-jāmiʿ “the plot of the mosque”; *Arḍ il-ḡarbiyyi/ iṣ-ṣarqiyyi* “the western/eastern area.” *Imm qbēbi* “the mother of (= possessing) little dome.” *Wādi l-fūwāra* “the valley of the source gushing from great depth” (cf. above, d, 1.2); *s-Saʿādi* “the valley of S.”

2.2. *Šafāʿammr*

The current form postdates the 14th century C.E., as Eshtori hap-Parhi has <špr ʿm> (= šfrʿm), cf. Yāqūt *Šafarʿamm* (cf. also Barag 1979: 204, the same form is reflected in Crus. *Saf(f)ran*, Beyer 1944–45: 208 with n. 4), but predates the time of Ḍāhir al-ʿUmar (*pace* al-Hilou 1986: 219): it is recorded as early as 1595/6 C.E. (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 192). *Ẓahr li-knīs* “The mountain ridge of the synagogue,” *Ḥallit il-Yahūd* and *Zētūn il-Yahūd* “the dell/olives of the Jews” are reminiscences of the Jewish community which existed here until the British mandate.⁵ *Ḥirbit il-Majdal* “the ruin of the tower” (attested as early as the 13th century C.E., see Barag 1979: 205, perhaps = *Majdal Ūrkamās* from 1595/6 C.E., Hütteroth and Ab-

4. Smith 1909: 397f. with n. 2 suggested that Gilead in Jud. 7, 3 may be a misreading for Gilboa. Was it motivated by a witness-pile (of stones) which was found on the Gilboa? (cf. Zori 1977: 6ff., reference kindly supplied by G. Yahalom). Gilead was reinterpreted as a witness-pile in the OT.

5. For such historical reminiscences in toponymy cf. a microtoponym named after Samaritans, viz., *Turbat is-Sumarā* “the tomb/cemetery of the Samaritans,” west of the Imm iz-Zurzūr area, both west of Gaza within the limits of the town. For Samaritans in Gaza up to ca. 1799 C.E. see Ben Zvi 1970: 32 and Schur 2002: 602, 609, 611.

dulfattah 1977: 193). *Ḥirbit li-Ksāyir* “the ruin of the grounds broken and prepared for cultivation” (with a Lebanese homonym, cf. Wardini 2002: 397). *Wādi l-malik* “the valley of the king.”

2.3. *Dālyet el-Karmel*

a. (*Ḥirbit*) *Tall il-‘Amār* “the (ruin of the) mound of ‘Amār.”
iḏ-Ḍēl is perhaps related to *ḏāyil* “the one who remains, the remaining one.”
il-Ḥubbi, cf. CA *ḥubba*^h “tract of sand” and Syr.-Pal. Arab. *ḥabb* “to sink the legs in sand, mud”; CA also a garment and *sisymbrium polyceraton* (Dozy 1881: 346b, a fragrant herb, perhaps wild thyme). *iz-Zarrā‘a* and *il-Jurn* (see c above).

2.4. *Nahalal*

a. *Ḥirbit/Tall/Wādi li-ḥḏēra* (cf. 1.1 above; Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 735: 62).

b. *‘Ēn /Tall iṣ-šēḥa* (cf. 1.1 above).

c. (*Wādi*)*‘Ēn il-bēḏa*, *Tall il-bēḏa* (see 1.3 above).

d. *‘Ēn/Wādi abū dōṣak* “the spring/valley of the father of (= possessing) large cushion or small mattress” (on which one sits down < Turkish < Persian).

‘Ēn il-ḥaṣabi “the spring of the piece of wood”; *‘Ēn imm rgīf* “the spring of the mother of (= possessing) r.” (a type of flat bread baked with cinders, coal, Dalman 1928–42, 4: 132). *Ḥirbet Bēsūmi*, *nomen unitatis* of *bēsūm* “ox-eye daisy, *chrysanthemum segetum* and *cornonarium* (Dalman 1928–42, 1:368f.).

Valleys (preceded by *Wādi*): *‘Ēn Mūsa* “of the spring of M.”; *l-Ḥalabi* “of H.”; *l-muṣrāra* “of the ground full of pebbles, flints” (cf. above, 1.1; Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 728f.: 47).

2.5. *Megiddo*

a. *il-Ġābi il-fōqa* and ~ *it-taḥta* (together *il-Ġubayyāt*, pl. based on a diminutive form); *‘Ēn* and *Wa‘ar il-ġābi* “the spring and the place with rugged/stony ground of the forest” (cf. above, b, β, 1.2).

b. *Bīr/‘Ēn il-Mansi* (see 1.2 above).

c. *iṭ-Ṭrēmi*, *‘yūn /Ḥirbit/Wādi Ṭrēmi*, diminutive, cf. perhaps CA *ṭarma*^h “liver.”

d. *li-Fḥēḥra* (near Ḥ., SWP map: el Fakhireh), *‘yūn li-Fḥēḥra*.

e. *li-Kḥēli* (cf. ~ and *Ḥariq li-kḥēli*, *Wādi li-kḥēli* all near Sūlam) diminutive of *kaḥli* “a flower of orange colour” (Dalman 1928–42, 1/1: 250, 10).

f. *Ḥirbit/Mōqi‘ il-manāṭīr* “the ruin/site of the elevated posts where one keeps the guarding, watch.”

g. *li-lēqi*, *‘Ēn li-lēqi* / “(the spring of) the bramble.”

h. (*‘Ēn /Ḥirbit*) *Imm il-qalāyid* (pl.) “(the ruin/spring of) the mother of (= possessing) collars, necklaces” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 724: 37: Qeled).

i. *Daḥīl*, *‘Ēn daḥīl* “(the spring of) the one who asks for hospitality.”

j. (*Wādi*) *l-miṣra‘* “(the valley of) the falling of water, cascade” (cf. Dalman 1928–42, 1/2: 530, 7).

k. *‘Ēn /Wādi li-mḡāyyir* “the spring /valley of the caves.”

l. *‘Ēn /Wādi il-jinnib*—the name of this valley and spring is apparently a *qittil* formation deriving from *jannaba* “to avoid, shun.”

m. *‘Ēn/Tall/Wādi abū zrēq* (cf. above, 1.2).

n. (*Ēn*) *is-samṭāt* “(the spring of) hot and ash-colored water.”

o. *ʿyūn/Jazīrat/Wādi ṭ-ṭrūq* “(the springs/island/peninsula/valley of) the drain, sewer, drip.”

p. (*Wādi*) *abū ʿarqūb* “(the valley of) father of (= possessing) a steep path, road” (cf. Ziv 2007: 208; al-Hilou 1986: 257).

q. *Māris it-tīni* “the strip, rectangular plot of land of the fig tree”; (*Wādi*) *ʿĒn it-tīni* “(the valley of) the spring of the fig tree.”

r. *Jazīrat il-fūwār* (near *ʿĒn il-~*, cf. above, d, 1.2).

Arḍ il-ʿaskariyyi “the military area.” *il-ʿAla* “the grandeur, nobility, high rank.” *il-ʿyūn* “the springs”; compound toponyms with the ground word *ʿyūn* are: *il-baqar* “the springs of the cattle”; *Brēk* “~ of B.”; *il-Ḥawwām* “~ of the flocks of wild fowl” (cf. Tall *abū ḥawwām*, above, 1.1, and *il-Ḥawwām*), *il-jawārīr* “~ of the slides” and (*ʿyūn*) *Wādi l-qaṣab* “(the springs of) the valley of bamboo canes, reeds.” *Bīr il-bayyāḍi* “the well of the white (untilled) ground” (cf. al-Maʿani 1992: 76); *Bīr li-mdīni* “the well of the town.” *li-Bsās* “the cats.” Determinate *nisbe*-forms: *id-Daḥbūriyyi*—based on *daḥbūr(a)* “ball of a herb” (cf. Dalman 1928–42, 5: 53, 12; 65, 14; 6: 155, 28); *li-qlēbiyyi*—based on a diminutive (*qlēb*) of *qalb* “heart”; *is-Smēriyyi*—based on a diminutive (*smēr*) deriving from S-M-R “to be brown, dark”; *il-Wāwiyyi*—based on *wāwi* “jackal.” *id-Duʿūk*, cf. *daʿak* “to nudge with the fists, to rumple” (cf. Dalman 1928–42, 4: 46), “to break”; *daʿki* “quarrel.” *Zahrāt id-dār* “the mountain ridge of the house.” *id-Ḍrāʿ* “the *Ḍ*.plot”; *ḍirāʿ* “arm’s length” is a measure of length, surface (pl. *durʿān*, cf. ~ *is-Sultān* on *Wādi s-sultān* west of Imm *il-faḥm*); *Ḍrāʿ il-ḡanam* “the *Ḍ*.plot of the sheep”; *id-Ḍrā il-juwwāni* “the inner *Ḍ*.plot.” *ʿĒn* “spring” precedes *il-bāša* “the Pasha” and *il-ḥalīl* “the friend.” (*il-)**Ġazālī* “the gazelle.” *Ḥallit is-sūq* “the dell of the market.” *Imm* “the mother of (= possessing)” is followed by *ir-rimāḥ* “spears” and *iš-šarāmīt* (pl. of *šarmūta*) “shreds, scraps; rags, tatters, rubbish.” *il-Jazīra* “the island/peninsula”; *Jazīrat Misʿad* “the island/peninsula of M.”; *Juzr li-bdēḥāt* “islands/peninsulae” followed by a determinate diminutive fem. pl. of *badāḥ* “extensive fields.” *ʿĒn il-jarba* “the spring of the scabby female”.

il-Jilūt (*Jilūt?*)—I am unable to verify whether the dental is emphatic. If it is (a verbal root *J-L-T* is not registered in the Arabic dictionaries at my disposal), it may derive from *J-L-Ṭ*, CA *jalaṭa*, “to force out, pull out, pluck out, tear, detach,” cf. *jlutṭ* “black edible (olives)” < “viscous, sticky”? (see Barthélemy 1935–54: 117; Denizeau 1960: 88). *il-Manāḥ* “the residence, quarter; place for halt and stay, kneeling the camels.” *Maqtal ḍiyāb* “the killing (place) of the wolves.” *Māris li-lēq* “the strip, rectangular plot of land, field of the brambles” (for the term *māris*, pl. *mawāris*, see Dalman 1928–42, 2: 39, 17); *Māris li-kbīr* “the large strip, rectangular plot of land.” *il-Midraj* “the step(s)” (carved on a mountainous path). *il-Muntafiḥa* “the swelling, inflating, puffing up.” *in-Naḡnaḡiyyi*—CA has *nuḡnūḡu* “silly, fool” cf. Syr.-Pal. Arab. *mnaḡnaḡ* “id,” *naḡnuḡ* “newly born infant” (up to one year) or “a spoiled infant” (of any age). *il-ʿŌsaja* is *nomen unitatis* (determinate) of *ʿōsaj* “a species of brambles” (cf. Dalman 1928–42, 1/2: 373, 10). *Qaṭrān* “tar.” *Qlēli iz-zḡira* “the little Q.” (with loss of the diminutive function of *qutayl* = *fuʿayl*). *ir-Rasm* “the vestige.” *is-Sidr* “the lote trees.” *is-Silli*, possibly Aram. “basket,” related to Syro-Pal. Arab. *salli* and *sill* “id.”

Since this Aramaic word was borrowed in Arabic, this toponym cannot be considered an ancient survival. *Sūq il-ʿatma* “the market of darkness, gloom” (referring to a section of the night between 20.00 and 21.00, cf. Dalman 1928–42, 1/2: 630). *Tall il-asmar* “the brown, dark mound” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 718: 24). *iṭ-Ṭarfi* “the new thing, novelty.” *Waʿrat il-wāwi* “the place with rugged, stony ground of the jackal.” *Wādi ṭ-ṭawāḥīn* “the valley of the watermills.”

2.6. *Indūr*

a. *Arḍ/Wādi jaddūʿ* “the area/valley” are followed by a *qattūl* formation of *J-D-ʿ* “to pull, drag bluntly, abruptly.”

b. *Mawāris il-bīr* “the strips, rectangular plots of land, fields of the well” and *Wādi l-bīr* “the valley of the well.”

Arḍ li-ktūf “the area of shoulders” (in a topographical sense). *Blēq* (diminutive) “multicoloured (horses).” *Darb/Ṭarīq il-waʿra* “the route of the place with rugged, stony ground.” *iṭ-Zahr* “the mountain ridge.” *Drāʿ il-ʿabd* “the *D*.plot of the slave.” *il-Ḥanjariyyi*—the determinate *nisbe* is based on *ḥanjar* “dagger.” *il-Ḥāriji* “the external one” (fem.). *il-Jazāyir* “the islands/peninsulae” (cf. Wardini 2001: 389b: *Zēyer*). *il-Kuhl* “layer, rough-cast” (of a wall). *li-Kwēm* (determinate diminutive of *kōm* “the heap, pile of sheaves/bundles”). *il-Majnūni* “the mad female.” *Mawāris iz-zētūn* (> *zitūn*) “the strips, rectangular plots of land, fields of the olives.” *Rūs il-bayādir* “the hills of the threshing floors” (near *Sūlam*; also near *il-Kafrīn*).

Valleys (sg. *wādi*): *l-jamal* “the camel’s”; *n-natš* (cf. *Ḥallit in-natš* southwest of *il-Kafrīn*), *nomen unitatis natši* “of the thorny plants” (more specifically pl. of “poterium burnet,” cf. Dalman 1928–42, 7: 23, 1); *sarrūj*, or an ancient survival? (cf. al-Hilou 1986: 205f.); *l-wāwiyāt* “of the jackals.”

2.7. *ʿAfūla*

a. *Māris/Šlūl Ṭarbani* “the strip/rectangular plot or waterfalls of *Ṭarbani*” (see above, 1).

b. (*Wādi*) *n-naqb* “(the valley of) the mountain pass.”

il-ʿAwaj < CA ʾaʿwaj “the crooked, tortuous.” *ʿĒn ḥamāmi* “the dove’s spring.” *Ḥirbit Tall il-ʿadas* “the ruin of the mound of the lentils” (cf. Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 749f.: 102; *Tall il-ʿadas* is also named *Tall il-fār*). *Imm rizz* “the mother of (= possessing) rice” (cf. 1.2b above). *il-ʿIrwi* “the buttonhole.” *Jazīrat il-aḡa* “the island/peninsula of the agha” (honorific title of a Turkish officer, also a Palestinian surname); *Jazīrat qaṣṣāb* “the island/peninsula of the butcher”; *Juzr li-Mqaṭṭaʿ* (near *Nahr ~*) “the islands/peninsulae of the M. river.” *il-Jisr* “the bridge.” *il-Mēl* “the slope.” *il-Mindassi* (in a marsh on the Kishon, see above, 1.3b). *in-Naḥli*. Determine *nisbe*—forms (fem. pl.): *il-Qassīsiyāt*—based on *qassīs* “christian priest”; *iṭ-Ṭayyāriyyāt*—based on *ṭayyār*, name of a species of grasshoppers of yellowish color; *iz-Zrēqiyyāt*—based on *zrēq* “magpie.” *is-Sūs* “the licorice.”

Valleys (sg. *wādi*): *abū šqēfi* “of the little rock”; *l-ʿAjjāwiʿ* “of the Ajjean” (a *nisbe* of the village of ʿAjjī in central Samaria); *il-Marābiʿ* “of the spring rains” (or of the spring abodes); *mwēliḥ* “of M.” (diminutive, related to *milḥ* “salt”); *šlūl il-ḥawāja* “of the waterfalls of the (non-Muslim) notable”; *šlūl il-mujēhid* “of the waterfalls of the (jihad) warrior” (a diminutive form of *mujahid*). *Waṭāt Yūsif il-ʿUmar* “the lowland of Y.”

2.8. *Sīlat el-Ḥārithīya*

a. *Jazīrat/Wādi il-ʿyūn* “island (or peninsula)/valley of the springs.”

b. *Ḥarīqat is-sūs*—“fire, blaze, conflagration of the licorice.”

Imm is-sūs “the mother of (= possessing) licorice.”

il-ʿAqūli “the hooked, crooked device” (actually a long stick ending with a hook used by sanitary workers in order to plunge their buckets in the ditches of sewage and withdraw them). *il-Basūli* “the gallant, courageous (female)”. *ʿArmūša* “a bunch, cluster of grapes without their seeds, rasped” (*nomen unitatis* of *ʿarmūš*). *Dabbūra* “hornet.” *iḏ-Zahrāt* “the mountain ridges.” *Imm zrēq* “the mother of (i.e., possessing) magpie.” *Jazīrat il-waqf* “the island/peninsula of the waqf.” *Māris il-balad* “the strip, rectangular plot of the village.” *Waʿra (waʿrat-)* “place with rugged, stony ground” precedes *il-ʿadas* “of the lentils”; *il-badawi* “of the Bedouin”; *il-bīr* “of the well”; *in-nazzāzi* “of the *nazzāz*” (a type of soil with water gushing out to its surface). *Wādi il-jamūs/kaslān* “the valley of the buffalo/lazy (one).” *Waṭat ʿAbd/Naṣr* “the lowland of A./N.”

2.9. *Jenīn*

il-Ḥarāyiq, pl. of *ḥarīq* “fire, conflagration.” *il-Mahlūf* “the hoe, pickax” (cf. Dalman 1928–42, 2: 122, 7; Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 2006: 741: 79).

2.10. *ʿEin Harod* (poor coverage of microtoponyms)

a. *Tall iṣ-šēḥ Ḥasan*, *ʿĒn šēḥ Ḥasan* “the mound/spring of Sheikh Hasan.”

b. *ʿĒn ir-Rīḥāniyyi* (near *Ḥirbit* ~) the determinate *nisbe* is based on *rīḥān* “sweet basil.”

c. *ʿĒn il-mayyiti* (see above, 1.3) and *Wādi l-mayyiti*.

Wādi abū tayyūn “the valley of (= possessing) *Linula viscosa*.”

2.11. *Beisān*

For the system of the canals in 2.11–12 in the 1930s as well as on the relationship between the mounds and the springs see Nir 1989: 93: fig. h/3 and 74f.: h/1 respectively. Fords on the relevant section of the Jordan River are listed in al-Dabbāḡ 1962–, 6: 451f.

a. *ʿĒn/Tall Bāla* (< ancient Βελλα, see Avi-Yonah 1976: 34b).

b. *Imm sarrīsi*, *Qanāt Imm sarrīsi* “the canal of the mother (= possessing) lucerne” (if *sarrīsi* is a mistake for the *nomen unitatis* of *sarīs*).

c. *Jaljāl*, *Qanāt Jaljāl il-qibliyyi* and *iṣ-šmāliyyi* “(the southern/northern canal of) the roll of the terrace(?)”

d. *ʿĒn/Nahr/Qanāt/Rās/Ṭahūnit il-jōsaq* “the spring/river/canal/hill/watermill of the lofty building.”

e. *ʿĒn/Tall/Wādi il-Manšīyyi* “the spring/mound/valley of M.” (“the place, avenue, public park”; add *Qanāt/Sēl il-M.* “the canal/watercourse of M.” on the map of is-Sāmīriya).

f. *ir-Rašīd*, *Qanāt ir-rašīd*, *Qanāt Ḥirbit ir-rašīd* “(the canal of) the well-directed, law-abide (one)” (also a common anthroponym) and “the canal of the ruin of *id*.”

g. *ʿĒn/Ḍrāʿ /Qanātʿis-Saḥni/* “the source or Ḍ.plot or canal of the hot spring” (cf. above, 1.3b).

h. *iṣ-Ṣabāhiyyi* (plot), *Qanāt iṣ-Ṣabāhiyyi* and *Sēl iṣ-Ṣabāhiyyi* ("the canal" and "the watercourse/stream" resp.) are a *nisbe* of *Ṣabāḥ* (PN "morning").

i. *Zahra* (plot) "flower" or "fine flower", *ʿĒn zahra*, *Tall zahra li-kbīr*, *Tall zahra iz-zǧīr*, and the plot *it-Tlūl* "the mounds" among them.

j. *li-Hsēniyyāt* is a determinate *nisbe*-form (fem. pl.) based on the anthroponym Ḥusayn; *Sēl Hsēniyyāt li-jdīd* "the new stream of Ḥ." This implies that this watercourse is actually a canal, like many such watercourses in the Beth Shean alluvium which has undergone a process of irrigational development in the 20th century C.E.

k. *il-Mafraq and Qanāt il-Mafraq li-jdīd* "the canal of the new branching of the road."

l. *Nahr il-ʿĀṣi* (with *ʿĒn il-ʿĀṣi and Jūrat il-ʿĀṣi* "the source/cavity [depression, hollow]" of A.) is probably a case of metonymy (named after the Orontes, cf. al-Hilou 1986: 371, cf. the plot *Marāḥ ʿĀṣi* south of Bēt Nattīf).

m. *ʿĒn and Qanāt Imm li-flūs* "the source/canal of the mother of (= possessing) coins" (homonymous with *Imm li-flūs* near Beth-Lid). *Bustān it-tūt* "the orchard of the mulberry." *Basātīn il-ʿabīd* "the orchards of the slaves" *Drāʿ il-ʿōsaj* "the D.plot of the brambles." *ʿĒn il-jamāʿīn* "the spring of the two troops" (see Smith 1909: 397f., n. 2). *Ḥān il-aḥmar* "the red inn." *Tall il-ḥiṣn* and *-il-jisr* "The mound of the fortress, citadel" and "The mound of the bridge" respectively. *il-Jūra iṣ-ṣarqiyyi* "the eastern cavity, depression, hollow." *Mawāris il-ʿadas* "the strips, rectangular plots of land, fields of the lentils." *Qanāt il-ʿAkkāwi, -il-ʿarji* "The canal of the man from Acco (Acre)" and "of the lameness" resp. *Tall Ṣimdīn* (presumably named after a Kurdish tribe, cf. Nikitine 1934 and von Bruinessen 1997); Kurdish and Turkmen tribes raised water buffaloes in the swamps (cf. above, d, 0; for Kurds cf. below, 2.12). *Tall T/Ṭūmis* "the mound of Ṭ." (like the map, al-Dabbāǧ 1962–, 6: 502 is unable to establish the quantity of the second vowel and whether the initial dental is emphatic or not).

It is clear that the name of this mound is not Semitic. The second component of *Tall Zanbaqiyyi* (a *nisbe*) is based on a non-Semitic form as well (< Persian *zanbaq* "lily"). *Wādī d-dawa* and *~ il-mutarammil* denote "the valley of the remedy, medication" and "the valley of the person who became a widower." *Waṭāt iz-Zēdāt* "the lowland of (the clan of) Z." *il-Ḥarāʾib* "the ruins." *iṭ-Ṭayyūn* "*Linula viscosa*." *Zabʿa* may be based on *zabʿ* "thyme." *iz-Zbēdiyyi* is a determined *nisbe* of *Zbēd*. Names of farms (ephemeral) are not included here and in 2.12 below.

2.12. *is-Sāmīriya* (as far as *Wādī Šūbāš*).

a. *Nahr il-Maddūʿ, ʿĒn il-Maddūʿ, Rās il-Maddūʿ*.

b. *Imm il-ʿammūd, ʿĒn Imm il-ʿammūd, Qanāt Imm il-ʿammūd* "the (source/canal) of the mother of (= possessing) a pillar."

c. *il-Baʿl, Qanāt il-baʿl* "(the canal of) the rain-fed (plot)."

d. *ir-Riḥāb, iṣ-Šēḥ Riḥāb, Qanāt ir-Riḥāb* "(the canal of Sheikh) R."

e. *Tall ir-Radǧa, iṣ-Šēḥ Radǧa* (cf. above, b, b, 3.1 and 1.4), as well as *Qanāt ir-Ra/idǧa* and *Ḥōr* (hollow, basically between two hills) *ir-Ra/idǧa*.

f. *id-Dǧēm, Qanāt id-Dǧēm* "(the canal of) D." *Dǧēm* is apparently a diminutive deriving from *daǧama* "to stop; crush."

g. *Baṣṣ Wādī l-jizl, Masīl il-jizl* ("the swamp of the stream-bed of j." and "the stream of j." resp.) as well as *Qanāt-, Mašraʿ* ("watering place," cf. al-Maʿani 1992: 95) and *Tall-* (al-Dabbāḡ 1962–, 6: 497 alias *Tall il-Qi ṭāf* below) *il-jizl* ((both on the mandatory map 1:20.000 of iṣ-Ṣafā). For *jizl* cf. CA *jazl*^{un} "considerable, generous."

h. *ʿĒn iz-zḡr* and *Mḥāḍit iz-zḡr* "the little source" and "the ford of the little (one)."

Mounds (sg. *Tall*): *Abū l-Faraj, iṣ-šēḥ Aḥmad, iṣ-šēḥ Ṣamād* (all named after persons including two sheikhs); *il-Karantīna* "the quarantine," *Kurd* "of the Kurds" (collective; for a possible Kurdish toponym cf. above, 2.11), *ir-raʿyān* "the shepherds," *il-qitāf* "crop, gathering, vintage" or "bunches, clusters" (of grapes, cf. Dalman 1928–42, 1/2: 559, 7), *Ṣufrāni* (apparently based on *ṣafara* "to whistle, hiss"); *iṭ-tūm* "the garlic"; *il-waḥṣ* "the savage, brute (person/beast)"; *Ṭaḥūnit is-sukkar* "of the sugar mill" (see al-Dabbāḡ 1962–, 6: 501). *Basātīn il-ḥamra* "the red orchards." *Qanāt il-jaʿār* (cf. above, b, b, 1.2), *-il-wāwiyāt* (cf. above, 2.5, 2.6). *Tall iṣ-ṣuqaf* (the PEF map reflects a form *ṣaqf*, cf. above, 1.3). *Šēḥit Faḍḍi* "the sheikha F." *Imm qwēq* "the mother of (= possessing) a small pelican" (cf. al-Hilou 1986: 372). *is-Sdūd* "the dams."

2.13. *Umm el Faḥm*

a. *Sālim* (see above, b, β, 1.3), *Bīr Sālim, Bayyārat* (garden, esp. citrus grove) *Sālim, Jidr Sālim* (but cf. *il-Jadr* near Zalaḥi); cf. CA *jidār* > Syr.Pal. Arab. *jdār* "wall or enclosure of an orchard or a kitchen-garden."

b. *Swēsi* and *Wādī ~* —presumably a diminutive of "horse" (with a Lebanese homonym, see Wardini 2002: 465b, s.v. *Swayse*); a diminutive of *sūsi* "worm which nibbles, corrodes the trees" is semantically less likely.

c. *il-Malāʿib* and *Waʿrat M.* "(the place with rugged, stony ground of) the places of entertainment."

Bīr iṣ-šēḥ Gānim "the well of Sheikh G" *Drāʿ Salmān* "the D.-plot of S." (see 2.5 above); *Durʿān il-bīr* "the D.-plots of the well." *ʿĒn il-furn* "the spring of the bakery." *Ḥalli (Hallit-)* "dell" precedes *iṣ-šēḥ* "of the sheikh"; *zābin* "of the buyer" (Arab. active participle of Z-B-N); *iz-zētūn* (> *zitūn*) "of the olives." *Ḥirbit il-ḥān* "the ruin of the inn, caravanserai" (for *ḥān*, which also denoted toll station, see Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 33f.); *Ḥirbit is-sitt Lēli* "the ruin of Lady L." *Imm ir-rīš* "the mother of (= possessing) feathers" (cf. *Tall ir-rīš*, Halpern, Lehmann, and Niemann 731:51). *il-Jalaim* "the hills." *il-Mawsaṭi* is a determinate *maqṭal* formation (with a fem. suffix) of *wasāṭa* "to be in the middle." *is-Saqi* "the brook, rivulet." *Sēl Imm il-ḥannūn* "the watercourse (stream) of the mother of (= possessing) anemone." *Sēl* < *sayl* (see al-Maʿani 1992: 84) is fairly rare in Palestine, except in the Beth Shean alluvium (cf. above, 2.11). *Sidr il-bayādir/il-ḥazīni* "the lote trees of the threshing floors/grieved female." *Waʿra* (*waʿrat-*) "place with rugged, stony ground" precedes *Bīr iṣ-šēḥ* "of the sheikh's well" and *iz-zaʿtar* "of the wild thyme." *Wādī ṭ-ṭayyūn* "the valley of *Linula viscosa*." *Waqiʿ il-Jāmiʿ* "the site of the mosque." *Zaʿrūra* "the azarole tree" (*nomen unitatis* of *zaʿrūr* = *crataegus monogina*).

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Alphabetic list of the normalized forms of modern toponyms

- il-Abhariyyi* 2, d, 1.1
Abū ‘arqūb 2, d, 2.5
Abū šūši 2, d, 1.2
Arḍ il-‘askariyyi 2, d, 2.5
Arḍ il-‘garbiyyi 2, d, 2.1
Arḍ jaddū‘ 2, d, 2.6
Arḍ il-jāmi‘ 2, d, 2.1
Arḍ li-ktūf 2, d, 2.6
Arḍ iṣ-ṣarqiyyi 2, d, 2.1
il-‘Af(f)ūli 2, d, 1.2
il-‘Ala 2, d, 2.5
il-‘Aqūli 2, d, 2.8
‘Armūša 2, d, 2.8
il-‘Awaj 2, d, 2.7
‘Ēn abū dōṣak 2, d, 2.4
‘Ēn Abū zrēq 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn il-‘Āṣi 2, d, 2.11
‘Ēn li-‘lēqi 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn barti 2, d, 1.2
‘Ēn il-bāša 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn il-bāz 2, d, 1.3
‘Ēn il-bēḍa 2, d, 2.4
‘Ēn dahīl 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn id-dālyi 2, d, 1.2
‘Ēn il-furn 2, d, 2.13
‘Ēn il-fūwār 2, d, 1.2, 2.5
‘Ēn il-ḡābi 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn il-ḡafr 2, d, 1.1
‘Ēn hamāmi 2, d, 2.7
‘Ēn Hamīdi 2, d, 1.1
‘Ēn il-hawwāra 2, d, 1.1
‘Ēn il-ḥalīl 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn il-ḥaṣabi 2, d, 2.4
‘Ēn Imm li-flūs 2.11
‘Ēn Imm il-qalāyid 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn imm rḡīf 2, d, 2.4
‘Ēn Ishāq 2, d, 1.1
‘Ēn Jalūd 2, d, 1.3
‘Ēn il-jama‘īn 2, d, 2.11
‘Ēn il-jarba 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn il-jinnib 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn il-jōsaq 2, d, 2.11
‘Ēn il-Maddū‘ 2, d, 1.3; 2.12
‘Ēn il-maḥšūra 2, d, 1.1
‘Ēn il-Mansi 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn il-Manšiyi 2, d, 2.11
‘Ēn il-mayyiti 2, d, 1.3
‘Ēn li-mdawwara 2, d, 1.1
‘Ēn li-mḡayyir 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn qabwi 2, d, 1.1
‘Ēn Qāmūn 2, d, 2.0
‘Ēn il-qubbi 2, d, 1.2
‘Ēn ir-Rīḥāniyyi 2, d, 1.3, 2.10
‘Ēn ir-rizz 2, d, 1.2
‘Ēn is-Saḥni 2, d, 2.11
‘Ēn is-samtāt 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn Ṣadūd 2, b, a
‘Ēn iṣ-ṣēḥa 2, d, 2.4
‘Ēn ṣēḥ Ḥasan 2, d, 2.10
‘Ēn it-tīni 2, d, 2.5
‘Ēn Tab‘ūn 2, b, a
‘Ēn iz-żḡir 2, d, 1.2
‘Ibdīs 2, b, b, 1.4
li-‘lēqi 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn il-‘āfi 2, d, 1.1
‘yūn il-baqar 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn Bīr li-ḥfayyir 2, d, 1.3
‘yūn Brēk 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn il-fart 2, d, 1.2
‘yūn li-Fḥēhra 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn il-Hawwām 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn il-jawarīr 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn il-Mansi 2, d, 1.2
‘yūn Qāmūn 2, d, 2.0
‘yūn iṭ-ta‘lab 2, d, 1.3
‘yūn Trēmi 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn iṭ-trūq 2, d, 2.5
‘yūn Wādī l-qaṣab 2, d, 2.5
il-Ba‘l 2, d, 2.12
Barbara 2, b, β, 1.2
il-Bārid 2, d, 1.2
Basātīn il-‘abīd 2, d, 2.11
Basātīn il-ḥamra 2, d, 2.12
il-Basūli 2, d, 2.0
Baṣṣ il-jizl 2, d, 2.12
Baṣṣit il-Mandassi 2, d, 1.3
il-Baṭn 2, d, 1.2
Baṭn is-samā 2, d, 1.2
il-Baṭṭūf 2, b, α
Bayyārat Sālīm 2, d, 2.13
Bēsān 2, b, α
Bēt laḥm 2, b, α
Bīr il-bayyādi 2, d, 2.5
Bīr id-dustra 2, d, 1.1
Bīr il-Mansi 2, d, 2.5
Bīr li-mdīni 2, d, 2.5
Bīr Rāba 2, d, 1.2
Bīr Sālīm 2, d, 2.13
Bīr is-Swēd 2, d, 1.3
Bīr iṣ-ṣēḥ Ḡānim 2, d, 2.13
Blēq 2, d, 2.6
li-Bsās 2, d, 2.5
Bṣēli 2, d, 1.2
Bustān it-tūt 2.11
Dabbūra 2, d, 2.8
id-Daḥbūriyyi 2, d, 2.5
Dahīl 2d, 2.5
Darb il-wa‘ra 2, d, 2.6
id-Du‘ūk 2, d, 2.5
id-Drā‘ 2, d, 2.5
Drā‘ il-‘abd 2, d, 2.6
Drā‘ il-ḡanam 2, d, 2.5
id-Drā il-juwwāni 2, d, 2.5
Drā‘ il-‘ōsaj 2, d, 2.11
Drā‘ is-Saḥni 2, d, 2.10
Drā‘ Salmān 2, d, 2.13
Dur‘ān il-bīr 2, d, 2.13
Dur‘ān is-sultān 2, d, 2.5
id-Ḍēl 2, d, 2.3
Farwāni 2, b, β, 3.1
li-Fḥēhra 2, d, 2.5
il-Fūli 2, d, 1.3
il-Ḡābi il-fōqa 2, d, 2.5
il-Ḡābi it-taḥta 2, d, 2.5
(il-)Ḡazālī 2, d, 2.5
il-Ḡubayyāt 2, d, 2.5
il-Harbaj 2, c
il-Ḥarāyiq 2, d, 2.9
Ḥariq li-kḥēli 2, d, 2.5
Ḥarīqat is-sūs 2, d, 2.8
Ḥawākīr il-ja‘ār 2, b, β, 1.2
il-Ḥawwām 2, d, 2.5
Ḥallit Ḥēfa 2, b, α
Ḥallit in-natš 2, d, 2.6
Ḥallit in-Nuṣrāni 2, b, β, 1.2
Ḥallit is-sūq 2, d, 2.5
Ḥallit iṣ-ṣēḥ 2, d, 2.13
Ḥallit zābin 2, d, 2.13
Ḥallit iz-zētūn 2, d, 2.13
Ḥān il-aḥmar 2.11
il-Ḥanjariyyi 2, d, 2.6
il-Ḥarā‘ib 2, d, 2.11
il-Ḥārijī 2, d, 2.6
il-Ḥazni 2, d, 1.3
Ḥirbit ‘Ābi 2, b, β, 1.4

- Ḥirbit Abū ‘Āmir* 2, d, 1.2
Ḥirbit il-‘Asāfni 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit ‘Ēn iṣ-ṣafṣāfi 2, d, 1.3
Ḥirbit il-bēḏa 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit Bēsūmi 2, d, 2.0
Ḥirbit Bēt Ilfa 2, d, 1.3
Ḥirbit il-bīr 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit Bīr il-bēdar 2, c
Ḥirbit Bīr il-bēda 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit Bīr ḫbas 2, d, 1.3
Ḥirbit Bsēmi 2, d, 2.0
Ḥirbit li-Fḥēhra 2, d, 2.5
Ḥirbit Harbaj 2, d, 2c
Ḥirbit il-Hārīṭiyyi 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit il-ḥašūra 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit il-ḥān 2, d, 2.13
Ḥirbit il-Ḥarrūbi 2, b, β, 1.4
Ḥirbit li-Ḥḏera 2, d, 2.4
Ḥirbit Imm ḡawādi 2, d, 1.3
Ḥirbit imm il-ḥašūra 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit Imm il-qalāyid 2, d, 2.5
Ḥirbit Jadūra 2, d, 2.0
Ḥirbit il-Jalami 2, d, 2.3
Ḥirbit li-Ksāyir 2, d, 2.2
Ḥirbit il-Majdal 2, d, 2.2
Ḥirbit il-manāṭīr 2, d, 2.5
Ḥirbit muṣrāra 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit Qsēqīṣ 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit ir-Rīḥāniyyi 2, d, 2.10
Ḥirbit is-sitt Lēli 2, d, 2.13
Ḥirbit iṣ-ṣēḥ Ishāq 2, d, 1.1
Ḥirbit Tall il-‘adas 2, d, 2.7
Ḥirbit Tall il-‘Amār 2, d, 2.3
Ḥirbit Ṭab‘ūn 2, b, α
Ḥirbit Ṭrēmi 2, d, 2.5
Ḥirbit Ṭūnis 2, d, 1.3
Ḥallit il-Yahūd 2, d, 2.2
Ḥirbit Zābid 2d, 2.0
Ḥnēfis 2, d, 1.2
Ḥōr ir-Ra/idḡa 2, d, 2.12
il-Ḥubbi 2, d, 2.3
Iksāl 2, b, α
Imm il-‘amad 2, d, 1.1
Imm ‘ammūd 2, d, 2.12
Imm il-ḥašūra 2, d, 1.1
Imm il-qalāyid 2, d, 2.5
Imm qbēbi 2, d, 2.1
Imm qwēq 2, d, 2.12
imm ir-rāyāt 2, d, 1.3
Imm ir-rimāḥ 2, d, 2.5
Imm ir-rīṣ 2, d, 2.13
Imm rizz 2, d, 2.7
Imm sarrīsi 2, d, 2.11
Imm is-sūs 2, d, 2.8
Imm iṣ-ṣarāmīṭ 2, d, 2.5
Imm zrēq 2, d, 2.8
Indūr 2, b, α
il-‘Irwi 2, d, 2.7
il-Ishāqiyyi 2, d, 1.1
Jabal il-qalēli 2, d, 1.3
Jabā(-)suwār 2, b, β, 1.2
il-Jadr 2, d, 2.13
il-Jalaīm 2, d, 2.13
Jalami 2, d, 1.3
Jalamit il-Manṣūra 2, d, 1.1
Il-Jaljāl 2.11
Janjār 2, b, α
il-Jazāyir 2, d, 2.6
il-Jazūra 2, d, 2.5
Jazīrat il-āga 2, d, 2.7
Jazīrat il-‘yūn 2, d, 2.8
Jazīrat il-fūwār 2, d, 2.5
Jazīrat Mis‘ad 2, d, 2.5
Jazīrat qaṣṣāb 2, d, 2.7
Jazīrat iṭ-trūq 2, d, 2.5
Jazīrat il-waqf 2, d, 2.8
Jbāta 2, b, α
Jēda 2, d, 1.1
Ji‘āra 2, b, β, 1.2
Jīda 2, d, 1.1
Jidr Sālīm 2, d, 2.13
il-Jilūt (Jilūt?) 2, d, 2.5
Jinūn 2, b, α
Jinjār 2, b, α
il-Jisr 2, d, 2.7
il-Jūra iṣ-ṣarqiyyi
Jūrat il-‘Āsi 2, d, 2.11
il-Jurn 2d, 2.0
Juzr li-bdēhāt 2, d, 2.5
Juzr li-Mqaṭṭa‘ 2, d, 2.7
Jwēdra 2, d, 1.2
Kafr il-fīrr 2, d, 1.3
li-Kfēri 2, d, 1.2
li-Kḫēli 2, d, 2.5
il-Kuhl 2, d, 2.6
li-Kwēm 2, d, 2.6
il-Lajjūn 2, d, 1.2
Lidd il-‘Awāḏīn 2, b, α
Ma‘lūl 2, b, α
Il-Maḫraq 2, d, 2.11
il-Maḫlūf 2, d, 2.9
il-Majnūni 2, d, 2.6
il-Malā‘ib 2, d, 2.13
il-Manāḥ 2, d, 2.5
il-Mandassi 2, d, 1.3
Manṣūra 2, c
Maqṭal diyāb 2, d, 2.5
Marāḥ ‘Āsi 2, d, 2.11
Māris li-‘lēq 2, d, 2.5
Māris il-balad 2, d, 2.8
Māris li-kbīr 2, d, 2.5
Māris it-tīni 2, d, 2.5
Māris Ṭarbani 2, d, 2.7
Marj Ibn ‘Āmir 2, a
Masīl il-jizl 2, d, 2.12
Mašra‘ il-jizl 2, d, 2.12
il-Maṭba‘ 2, d, 1.1
Mawāris il-bīr 2, d, 2.6
Mawāris iz-zētūn 2, d, 2.6
il-Mawsaṭi 2, d, 2.13
il-Mēl 2, d, 2.7
Mḡārit il-jahannam 2, d, 1.1
Mḡārit is-sīḥ 2, d, 1.1
Mḫāḏit iz-z ḡir 2, d, 2.12
il-Midraj 2.5
il-Mindassi 1.3, 2.7
il-Mišra‘ 2.5
Mjēdil 2, b, β, 2.1
Mōqi‘ il-manāṭīr 2, d, 2.5
Mōqi‘ Tall li-jḥāṣ 2, d, 1.3
(im-)Mqēbli 2, d, 1.2
il-Mundassi 2, d, 1.3
il-Muntaḫiḥa 2, d, 2.5
in-Nāḡnāgiyyi 2, d, 2.5
Nahr il-‘Āsi 2, d, 2.11
Nahr il-Jalūd 2, d, 2.0
Nahr il-jōsaq 2, d, 2.11
Nahr il-Maddū‘ 2, d, 2.12
Nahr il-Mqaṭṭa‘ 2, d, 1.1
in-Nahli 2, d, 2.7
in-Naqb 2, d, 2.7
Nēn 2, b, α
Nūris 2, b, β, 1.4
il-‘Ōsaja 2, d, 2.5
Qabāṭyi 2, b, β, 1.1
Qanāt il-‘Akkāwi 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt il-‘arji 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt il-Ba‘l 2, d, 2.12
Qanāt id-dḡēm 2, d, 2.12
Qanāt Ḥirbit ir-Rašīd 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt Imm ‘ammūd 2, d, 2.12
Qanāt Imm sarrīsi 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt il-ja‘ār 2, d, 2.12

- Qanāt Jaljāl il-qibliyyi* 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt Jaljāl iṣ-ṣamāliyyi 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt il-Jalūd 2, d, 2.0
Qanāt il-jizl 2, d, 2.12
Qanāt il-jōsaq 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt il-Mafraq li-jdīd 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt il-Manšiyi 2, d, 2.12
Qanāt il-qanṭara 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt ir-Rašīd 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt ir-Rihāb 2, d, 2.12
Qanāt is-Saḥni 2, d, 1.3; 2.11
Qannāt iṣ-Ṣabāhiyyi 2, d, 2.11
Qanāt Tall iṣ-šōk 2, d, 1.3
Qanāt il-wawiyāt 2, d, 2.12
il-Qanṭara 2, d, 1.3
il-Qassīsiyāt 2, d, 2.7
Qatrān 2, d, 2.5
Qīri 2, d, 1.1
li-qlēbiyyi 2, d, 2.5
qlēli iz-žgīra 2, d, 2.5
Qūmyi 2, d, 1.3
Quṣqūṣ 2, d, 1.1
Radḡa 2, b, β, 3.1
Rās il-jōsaq 2, d, 2.11
Rās il-Maddūʿ 2, d, 2.12
ir-Rasm 2, d, 2.5
ir-Rihāb 2, d, 2.12
Ruḡṭiyyi note 3
Rūs il-bayādir 2, d, 2.6
Sālim 2, d, 2.13
Sammūniyyi 2, b, α
is-Samṭāt 2, d, 2.5
is-Saqi 2, d, 2.13
is-Sdūd 2, d, 2.12
Sēl Ḥsēniyyāt il-jdīd 2, d, 2.12
Sēl Imm il-ḥannūn 2, d, 2.13
Sēl il-Manšiyi 2, d, 2.12
Sēl iṣ-Ṣabāhiyyi 2, d, 2.11
is-Sidr 2, d, 2.5
Sidr il-bayādir 2, d, 2.13
Sidr il-ḥazīni 2, d, 2.13
is-Silli 2, d, 2.5
is-Smēriyyi 2, d, 2.5
Sūlam 2, b, α
Sūq il-ʿatma 2, d, 2.5
is-Sūs 2, d, 2.7
Swēsi 2, d, 2.13
iṣ-Ṣabāhiyyi 2, d, 2.11
Ṣandali 2, d, 1.3
Ṣafarʿamm 2, d, 2.2
Ṣaṭṭa 2, d, 1.3
iṣ-Ṣēḥ Brēk 2, d, 1.1
Ṣēḥit Faḍḍi 2, d, 2.12
iṣ-Ṣēḥ Mḥammad 2, d, 1.3
iṣ-Ṣēḥ Riḥāb 2, d, 2.12
Ṣlūl Ṭarbani 2, d, 2.7
Ṣlūl il-wāwi 2, d, 1.1
Tall Abū l-Faraj 2, d, 2.12
Tall abū ḥawwām 2, d, 1.1
Tall Abū Qdēs 2, d, 1.2
Tall Abū šūši 2, d, 1.2
Tall Abū zrēq 2, d, 2.5
Tall il-Āgbāriyyi 2, d, 1.2
Tall il-asmar 2, d, 2.5
Tall il-ʿali 2, d, 1.1
Tall Bāla 2, d, 2.11
Tall il-bēḡa 2, d, 2.4
Tall iḡ-dāhab 2, d, 1.2
Tall il-fār 2c
Tall il-fīr 2, d, 1.3
Tall ḡalta 2, d, 1.1
Tall Harbaj 2, c
Tall il-ḥamīr 2, d, 1.3
Tall il-ḥiṣn 2, d, 2.11
Tall li-ḥḡēra 2, d, 2.4
Tall li-ḥnēzir 2, d, 1.3
Tall li-jḡāṣ 2, d, 1.3
Tall il-Karantīna 2, d, 2.11
Tall Kurd 2, d, 2.12
Tall il-madrassi 2, d, 1.3
Tall il-mālḡa 2, d, 1.3
Tall il-Manšiyi 2, d, 2.11
Tall il-maṣṭabi 2, d, 1.3
Tall il-mutasallim 2, d, 1.2
Tall li-mwāji 2, d, 1.1
Tall in-naḡl 2, d, 1.1
Tall Nimrūd 2, d, 1.3
Tall il-qassīs 2, d, 1.1
Tall Qēmūn 2, b, α
Tall il-qitāf 2, d, 2.12
Tall ir-raʿyān 2, d, 2.12
Tall ir-rīš 2, d, 2.13
Tall is-samn 2, d, 1.1
Tall iṣ-šārim 2, d, 1.3
Tall Ṣufrāni 2, d, 2.12
Tall iṣ-ṣammām 2, d, 1.1
Tall iṣ-ṣaqf 2, d, 1.3
Tall iṣ-ṣēḡa 2, d, 2.4
Tall iṣ-ṣēḡ Aḡmad 2, d, 2.12
Tall iṣ-ṣēḡ Dawūd 2, d, 1.3
Tall iṣ-ṣēḡ Ḥasan 2, d, 2.10
Tall iṣ-ṣēḡ Mḥammad 2, d, 2.12
Tall iṣ-ṣēḡ Ṣamād 2, d, 2.12
Tall Ṣimdīn 2, d, 2.11
Tall iṣ-ṣuqaf 2, d, 2.12
Tall T/Ṭūmis 2, d, 2.11
Tall tōra 2, d, 1.2
Tall iṭ-tūm 2, d, 2.12
Tall Ṭaḡūnit is-sukkar 2, d, 2.12
Tall il-waʿr 2, d, 1.1
Tall il-waḡṣ 2, d, 2.12
Tall Zahra li-kbīr 2, d, 2.11
Tall Zahra li-zḡīr 2, d, 2.11
Tall Zanbaqiyyi 2, d, 2.11
Tʿinnik 2, b, α
it-Tlūl 2, d, 2.11
Tlūl li-jḡāṣ 2, d, 1.3
Tlūl iz-zahra 2, d, 1.3
Turbit is-Sumāra note 5
Ṭaḡūnit il-ḡirbi 2, d, 1.3
Ṭaḡūnit il-jisr 2, d, 1.3
Ṭaḡūnit il-mālḡa 2, d, 1.3
Ṭaḡūnit il-Qōsi 2, d, 1.3
Ṭaḡūnit ir-rās 2, d, 1.3
Ṭaḡūnit is-Saḡni 2, d, 1.3
Ṭaḡūnit iṣ-ṣēḡ 2, d, 1.3
Ṭaḡūnit iṣ-ṣēḡ Ibraḡīm 2, d, 1.3
Ṭaḡūnit wēbidi 2, d, 1.3
Ṭarbani 1
iṭ-Tarfi 2, d, 2.5
Ṭarīq il-waʿra 2, d, 2.6
iṭ-Ṭayyāriyyāt 2, d, 2.7
iṭ-Ṭayyūn 2, d, 2.11
iṭ-Trēmi 2, d, 2.5
Waʿar il-ḡābi 2, d, 2.5
Waʿrat il-ʿadas 2, d, 2.8
Waʿrat il-badawi 2, d, 2.8
Waʿrat il-bīr 2, d, 2.8
Waʿrat Bīr iṣ-ṣēḡ 2, d, 2.13
Waʿrat Malāʿib 2, d, 2.13
Waʿrat in-nazzāzi 2, d, 2.8
Waʿrat il-wāwi 2, d, 2.5
Waʿrat iz-zaʿtar 2, d, 2.13
Wādi abū ʿarqūb 2, d, 2.5
Wādi abū dōṣak 2, d, 2.4
Wādi abū ḡadīdi 2, d, 1.3
Wādi abū ṣḡēfi 2, d, 2.7
Wādi abū ṭayyūn 2, d, 2.10
Wādi Abū zrēq 2, d, 2.5

- Wādi l-asmar* 2, d, 1.3
Wādi l-‘Ajjāwī 2, d, 2.7
Wādi l-‘ēn 2, d, 2, d, 1.3
Wādi ‘Ēn Mūsa 2, d, 2.4
Wādi ‘Ēn it-tīni 2, d, 2.5
Wādi l-‘yūn 2, d, 2.8
Wādi ‘yūn il-kaḥl 2, d, 1.3
Wādi l-bēda 2, d, 2.4
Wādi l-bīr 2, d, 2.6
Wādi d-dawa 2, d, 2.11
Wādi l-fūwāra 2, d, 2.1
Wādi l-Ḥalabi 2, d, 2.4
Wādi l-ḥarriyyi 2, d, 1.3
Wādi li-ḥfayyir 2, d, 1.3
Wādi l-ḥazni 2, d, 1.3
Wādi li-ḥdēra 2, d, 2.4
Wādi li-ḥnēzīr 2, d, 1.3
Wādi jaddū 2, d, 2.6
Wādi l-Jalūd 2, d, 2.0
Wādi l-jamal 2, d, 2.6
Wādi l-jamūs 2, d, 2.8
Wādi li-jdīd 2, d, 1.3
Wādi il-jinnib 2, d, 2.5
Wādi l-kaslān 2, d, 2.8
Wādi li-kḥēli 2, d, 2.5
Wādi l-malik 2, d, 2.2
Wādi l-Manšīyyi 2, d, 2.11
Wādi l-marābi 2, d, 2.7
Wādi l-mayyiti 2, d, 2.10
Wādi li-mḡayyir 2, d, 2.5
Wādi l-mišra 2, d, 2.5
Wādi l-muṣrāra 2, d, 2.4
Wādi l-mutarammil 2, d, 2.11
Wādi mwēlih 2, d, 2.7
Wādi n-naqb 2, d, 2.7
wādi n-natš 2, d, 2.6
Wādi l-qalēli 2, d, 1.3
Wādi l-qanṭara 2, d, 1.3
Wādi r-raml 2, d, 1.3
Wādi s-Sa‘ādi 2, d, 2.1
Wādi sarrūj 2, d, 2.6
Wādi s-sidr 2, d, 1.3
Wādi s-sultān 2, d, 2.5
Wādi swēsi 2, d, 2.13
Wādi šābir 2, d, 1.3
Wādi š-šarrār 2, d, 1.3
Wādi šlūl il-ḥawāja 2, d, 2.7
Wādi šlūl il-mujēhid 2, d, 2.7
Wādi š-šu‘li 2, d, 1.3
Wādi ṭ- ṭawāḥīn 2, d, 2.5
Wādi ṭ-ṭayyūn 2, d, 2.12
Wādi Ṭrēmi 2, d, 2.5
Wādi ṭ-ṭrūq 2, d, 2.5
Wādi l-wāwiyāt 2, d, 2.6
Waḡi’ il-jāmi’ 2, d, 2.13
il-Waraqāni 2, d, 1.2
Waṭa il-Jalūd 2, d, 1.3
Waṭat ‘Abd 2, d, 2.8
Waṭat Naṣr 2, d, 2.8
Waṭāt Yūsif il-‘Umar 2, d, 2.7
Waṭāt iz-Zēdāt 2, d, 2.11
il-Wāwīyyi 2, d, 2.5
Za‘rūra 2, d, 2.13
Zab‘a 2, d, 2.11
Zabdi 2, d, 1.1
Zahra 2, d, 2.11
iz-Zarrā‘a 2, d, 2.0
iz-Zbēdiyyi 2, d, 2.11
Zbūbi 2, d, 1.2
Zētūn il-Yahūd 2, d, 2.2
Zir‘īn 2, b, α
iz-Zrēqīyyāt 2, d, 2.7
iṣ-Zahr 2, d, 2.6
iṣ-Zahrāt 2, d, 2.8
Ḍahrat id-dār 2, d, 2.5
Ḍahr li-knīs 2, d, 2.2

Reexamining Area DD at Megiddo

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Introduction

The surface in the north of Tel Megiddo, from Palace 6000 in the east to the gate area in the west, is characterized by a steep slope that veers towards the west. This slope creates significant height variations between remains in close proximity from the same stratum, and similarities in height between remains from different strata. In addition, this area was excavated segment by segment by different teams: Schumacher (1908) initially cleared the *Nordtor* (North Gate). Afterwards, the University of Chicago Expedition (UCE) exposed two strips—Area C in the east and Area D in the west (Lamon and Shipton 1939). Still later, the UCE proceeded to Area DD, further excavating Schumacher's section (Loud 1948; Harrison 2004). Area DD borders on the western boundary of the area of Palace 6000, which was excavated by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJE; Yadin 1966, 1967, 1972; Zarzecki-Peleg 2005), Building 6107 (Stratum VB) and the row of rooms to the west of Palace 6000 (Stratum VA–IVB). The excavations here were later renewed by the Tel Aviv University Expedition (TAUE; Finkelstein, Ussishkin, and Halpern 2006). This confusion has generated imprecise conjectures and erroneous conclusions. Clarification of the data is therefore necessary in order to suggest a new interpretation of the remains in Area DD.

Description of the Remains

Stratum VIA

Iron I Megiddo is notable for the gradual development of the settlement. Alongside structures which continued in existence from Stratum VIB, new structures were added in Stratum VIA. Some of these new structures served public purposes, e.g., Structure 2072, erected in Area AA, next to the city entrance (Loud 1948: Fig. 368), which probably served as the governor's residence. Along the edge of the settlement, a band of structures serving as a defense line was established. In Area DD a series of buildings was uncovered, divided into two blocks—northern and southern—by a perimeter street which continued from east to west (Loud 1948: 114, Fig.

Author's note: This article includes material discussed in my Ph.D. dissertation, submitted in March 2005 to the Senate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The thesis was written under the supervision of Prof. Amihai Mazar, whom I acknowledge with thanks. I am also grateful to Carl Ebert who translated this essay from Hebrew.

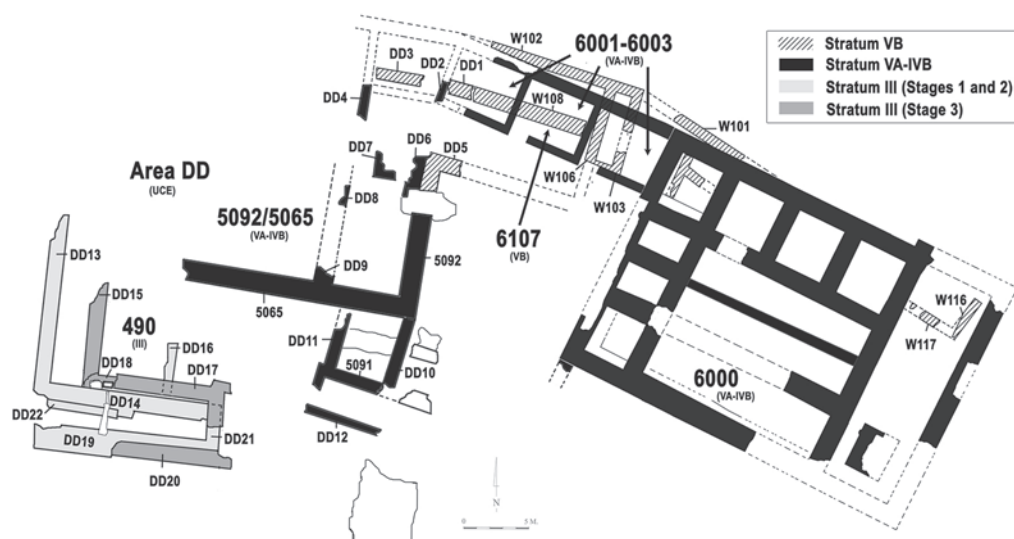


Fig. 1. Megiddo, Area DD and Palace 6000, Strata VB, VA-IVB, and III.

413; Harrison 2004). A wider strip some 50 m long was excavated on the northern block. In each block the buildings were built side by side with no division between houses. No alleys or outer walls which could aid in the division into separate dwelling units were discernible. On the other hand when the thresholds and the floors were compared, there were significant and systematic differences in elevation—a fact that did assist in dividing the block into dwelling units¹. The various building segments excavated by the HUJE (Yadin 1961: 91; Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: Plans 2, 5) and the TAUE to the east (Cline 2006) comprised the continuation of the same northern block. The surface of the settlement in this area rises steeply to the east, while differences in elevation become less pronounced in the area below the remains of Palace 6000 (Stratum VA-IVB). The destruction which overcame Megiddo VIA at the end of Iron I Age provides an important stratigraphic anchor in the sequence of Iron Age strata.

Stratum VB

This stratum represents an unfortified settlement, characterized mainly by simple private structures. Those erected on the edge along the slope served as the defensive line. Building 6107, at the western edge of Yadin's excavation area (in the

1. The floor levels of the houses show height differences ranging from half a meter to a meter and a half between adjacent buildings. The units (Loud 1948: Fig. 413) are: Unit a (Square K/10)—the threshold elevation, usually higher than the floor, is at 156.20. Unit b (4000/5001, Square K/10)—the floor elevation is at 156.80. Unit c (5000/4011, Squares K/10–11)—the floor elevation is unknown (for possible continuation of the same building in unit d, see below). Unit d (5010, Square K/11)—the floor elevation is 158.70/50. It is possible that Units c and d belong to one enlarged building. Unit e (5224/5129, Squares K/11–12)—the floor elevation is at 159.80/70. Unit f (5132, Square K/12)—the floor elevation is at 160.25/20.

vicinity of Palace 6000), is a singular (probably) public building, although its function is difficult to ascertain (Fig. 1; Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 21–26, Plans 2, 6). It differs in construction and character from the other buildings of the settlement of the same period. The HUJE uncovered only the northeastern end of the building in an area 7×12.5 m (the area to the south was not uncovered, whereas the areas to the west and southwest were excavated by the UCE in their Area DD). The preservation of the remains is not good. Floors have been found fragmentary and close to the height of the top of the walls.

Building 6107 comprises an intermediate stratigraphic unit which separates the remains of Strata VA–IVB (the row of rooms adjoining Palace 6000 from the west; see below), and the remains of Stratum VIA (building 5132/6208, see above) covered by the typical brick collapse of the destruction of this stratum. The understanding of the remains found in between these two stratigraphic anchors is especially problematic. The unsuitable proportion between the width of inner and outer walls in Building 6107 renders it difficult to understand the plan and function of the building: the width of Wall 108 (ca. 1.35 m), which is found *within the building*, is wider than the outer walls (ca. 0.80 m). It is possible that this anomaly may have a stratigraphic significance, and that elements of two sub-phases were mistakenly combined into one phase (Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 22–24).²

According to notes made during the fieldwork, it is clear that Yadin and Dunayevsky considered Building 6107 as the northeastern corner of a relatively large, closed unit—a palace/fortress of Stratum VB. Furthermore, Yadin compared the area of Palace 6000 and surrounding remains with the area of the gate and stated that apparently here too a similar phenomenon existed of continuity of function of an area throughout a number of strata.

Wightman (1984) attempted to join Building 6107 of Stratum VB to the remains uncovered in Area DD. He reconstructed a spacious fortified structure with an almost-square shape (ca. $32/38 \times 41/46$ m; 1984: 133, Fig. 1). He presumed that a kind of casemate system surrounded a courtyard (1984: 132). Wightman claimed that the walls of the building were not parallel as a result of aligning the building with the slope on one side and the surrounding buildings on the other (1984: 135). Wightman compared the building to “fortresses” in the Negev Highlands, such as Ein Kadis and Atar Haroa, although these parallels have an oval plan. In my opinion, not only does Wightman’s reconstruction not correspond to the stratigraphic data (see the stratigraphic discussion below), but it would also be a conceptual error to compare the building at the city of Megiddo with the Negev “fortresses.”

To sum up this point, the meager information concerning Building 6107 does not enable an understanding or reconstruction of its plan and function.

2. In Area K (in the southeast of the tell), the TAUE exposed evidence of more than two clear stages between the destruction of Stratum VIA and the erection of Stratum IVA (K-3b, K-3a, K-2b, and K-2a), which were ascribed to Strata VB and VA–IVB (Lehmann, Killebrew, and Gadot 126ff.). The fact that there were several stages within Stratum VB in Area K reinforces the assumption that the irregularities in the construction of Structure 6107 revealed by the HUJE also constitute secondary stages within Stratum VB.

Stratum VA–IVB

During the days of Strata VB and VA–IVB the town underwent a process of gradual development, which suddenly came to a halt at its peak. Alongside continuity, considerable change is discernible in the course of Stratum VA–IVB. These changes are mainly connected with the construction of public buildings over the remains of private houses from Stratum VB—first and foremost, Palaces 1723 and 6000. These palaces give expression to the city's efflorescence in the days of Stratum VA–IVB.

To the west of Palace 6000 the HUJE uncovered a row of three rooms, next to and parallel to the slope of the tell—Rooms 6001, 6002, and 6003 (Fig. 1; Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 39–41, Plan 10). The westernmost room was cut by the Schumacher excavation and/or the UCE work (Area DD; Loud 1948: Fig. 414). However, Yadin noted that its outline could be restored and the beginning of an additional room could be reconstructed according to the drawing published (the tops of the walls of Rooms 6001–6003 were already partly uncovered by the UCE; Yadin 1961: 87–88; for comparison see the aerial photograph in Loud 1948: Fig. 119). The rooms have a common wall to the south, and one to the north; both adjoined the palace building. Wall 55, which faces the slope of the tell, was crudely built and is thicker than the other walls (Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 39–40). The remaining walls in this system were built of one row of medium-sized ashlar blocks, sometimes almost square, aside from a few exceptions at doorjambs and corners, apparently for constructional stability. The differences in elevation between the floors of the rooms (sloping towards the west) are noteworthy.

Yadin came to the conclusion that the row of rooms located to the east of Palace 6000 and the rooms to the west of the palace were actually two sections of a casemate wall and termed them the “eastern and western casemates” (Yadin 1961: 87–92; 1970: 48, 55, plan on p. 44). Over the years, scholars expressed different opinions on the remains exposed by Yadin (Aharoni 1972; Herzog 1976, 1992, 1997; Ussishkin 1980; Wightman 1984, 1985; Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 42–44, 78–82; Cline 2006: 114–15).

Stratum IVA

The transition between Stratum VA–IVB and IVA at Megiddo is marked by a total hiatus (Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 262–65). The Stratum IVA city possessed a royal administrative character, constructed according to a new architectural scheme. A number of monumental public buildings was established, including stable complexes, massive fortifications, and water installations. In Area DD, Structure 5082 was erected as part of the northern stable complex (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 32 ff., Fig. 49, Loud 1948: Fig. 414). The end of Stratum IVA can be ascribed to the Assyrian conquest—the campaign of Tiglath-Pileser III.

Stratum III

Megiddo III represents a new period of efflorescence as the capital of an Assyrian province (Lamon and Shipton 1939: 62ff.; Peersmann 2000). It was rebuilt according to a plan that differed from that of the Israelite administrative city (Stratum IVA); it was influenced by the Assyrian tradition, even though it incorporated

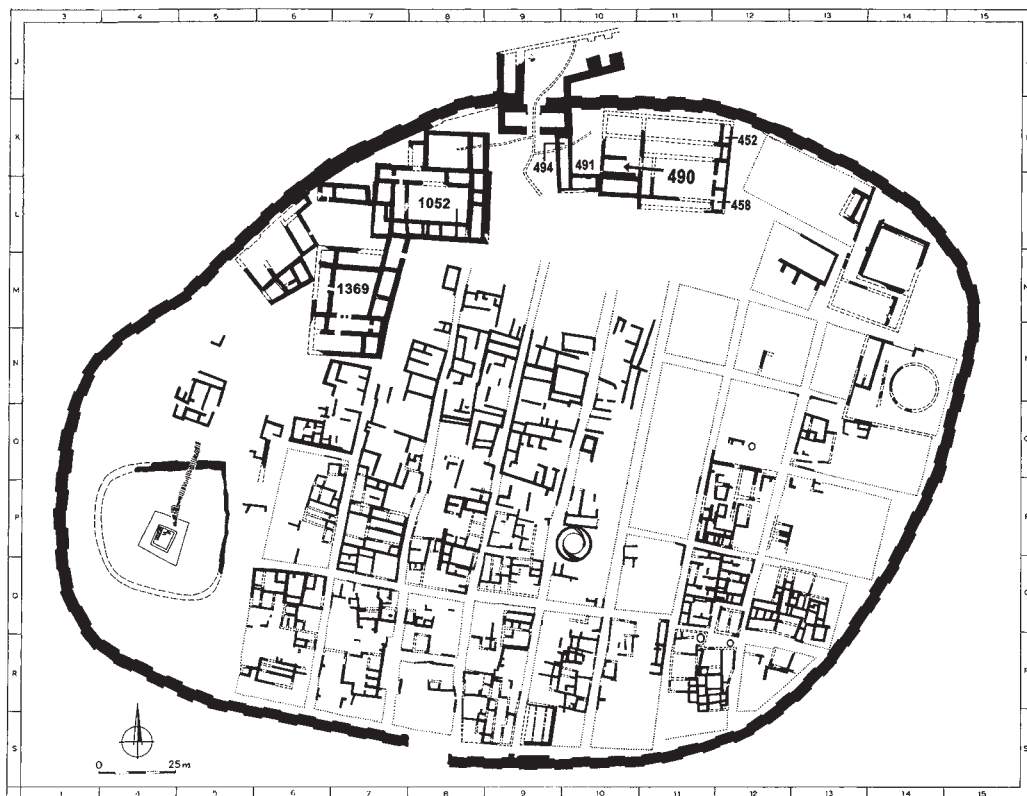


Fig. 2. Megiddo, Stratum III (after Herzog 1992: Fig. 17). Courtesy of Ze'ev Herzog, Tel Aviv University.

public buildings from Stratum IVA (city wall 325, segments of the stable complex in secondary use, the water system, etc.). The city was redesigned from the center southwards as a network of octagonal streets, dividing it into seven sectors (Fig. 2). Dwellings and other simple buildings were established here. Those denoting the foci of government were concentrated in the north of the tell, near the city entranceway (Structures 1052, 1369, 490, 1853, 483, 317, and the structure built over Stables 407, Peersman 2000: 69–74, Fig. 89). East of the gate, Building 490 was constructed. It was exposed segment by segment (see above): Initially a strip across its middle was excavated by Schumacher in the area of the Nordtor (North Gate—Sixth Stratum; 1908: 38, 132 ff., Tf. XLIII). Afterwards, the UCE exposed two strips—in the east and west (Areas C and D respectively; Lamon and Shipton 1939: Figs. 71, 73, 89); and, still later, the UCE team continued the excavation of Schumacher's section (Area DD; Loud 1948: Fig. 414). Each segment of Structure 490 was published independently, although Lamon and Shipton (1939: 74) tried to establish the connection between certain vestiges, noting that it is reasonable that Rooms 452–458 formed the eastern end of Structure 490, owing to the nature of the construction and the orientation of the remains.

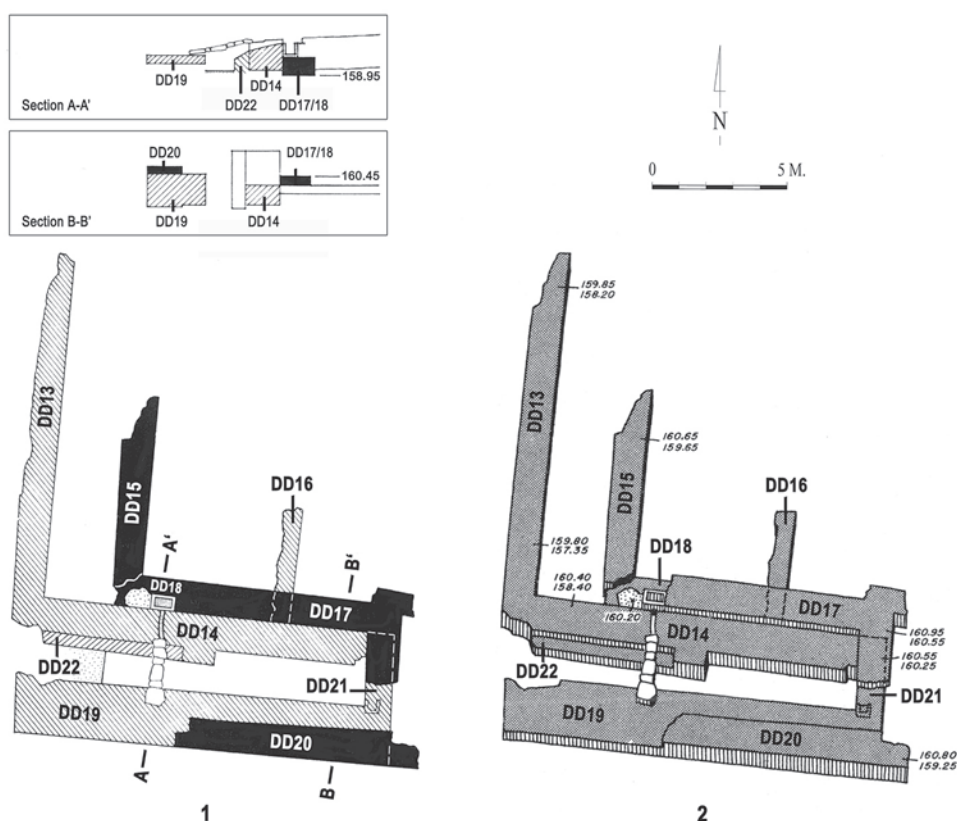


Fig. 3. Megiddo, Area DD, the southwestern Area—Square L/11 (after Loud 1948: Figs. 277 and 414).

Area DD

The remains assigned by the UCE to Strata V in Area DD are fragmentary and difficult to understand (Fig. 3; Loud 1948: 114–16, Figs. 277, 414—Strata VB and VA):

Walls of the two strata are so intertwined and their levels so wandering, especially in Square L/11 (Fig. 277), that it is impossible to determine which was built first, much less how they were used. Both are therefore included on the same plan. Buildings in these strata are evidently of more importance here than elsewhere on the mound. The architecture is impressive (Fig. 278) and of far greater scale than remains elsewhere. (Loud 1948: 116)

Yadin (1972: Fig. 39) combined the massive corner of Walls 5092 and 5065 with Palace 6000 and the “western casemate wall,” ascribing them to Stratum VA–IVB. Herzog (1976: 116, Fig. 76; 1992: Fig. 15) and Kempinski (1989: Pl. 11) also tried to link the remains, and accordingly attached wall segments from the south and southwest of Wall 5065 (Square L/11) to the palace stratum (Herzog related to the corner of Walls 5092 and 5065 only in his earlier reconstruction). Scholars have

only considered the later remains (Stratum VA–IVB), while overlooking Stratum VB. Wightman (1984) was the first to actually try linking Structure 6107 (Stratum VB) with the Area DD remains. As he understood it, the northeastern corner of Structure 6107 was an element delimiting a courtyard in the southwest; it comprised a casemate-like structure (1984: 132, Fig. 1). In Area DD (Walls DD1³ and DD3) he discerned the continuation of the “inner casemate wall” (Wall 108; see Fig. 1) by following the extension and direction of the walls (1984: 133). He believed that the two segments of the thin walls (DD2 and DD4) were integrated into or abutted the casemate walls, while the segment of another wall (DD8) was also probably from Stratum VB. He argued that the system of thick walls from Square L/11 was the continuation of this casemate system. In the east, he surmised, a gate had been installed in the southern side of the casemate wall (1984: 134). In his Stage Vai, part of the structure was rebuilt (e.g., Wall DD17). Walls 5065 and 5092 and the additions in the south (such as Wall 5091) were erected simultaneously with Palace 6000 in Stage Viii (1984: 135). The latest stage discerned by Wightman in Square L/11 was that in which a plaster floor was laid, and a basin to which a channel was attached (it is possible that a similar system was built over the western portion of the conjectured gate, in the southern wall (DD21) of the reconstructed structure).

A Reexamination

An examination of the data from Area DD raises several points which should be taken into consideration:

1. The surface of the area is characterized by two decisive topographic features: the edge of the slope to the north and the steep declivity to the west.
2. The building remains in Area DD were of exceptionally high quality. The UCE excavators stressed that the construction was excellent in comparison to that of other buildings located in different areas, but dating to the same stratum.
3. There is architectural and stratigraphic discontinuity between the northeastern area (the 5092/5065 corner and Walls DD2–DD12) and southwestern area (Walls DD13–DD21). The former is sealed both above and below respectively by the Stratum VIA remains and Sables 5082 of Stratum IVA. The latter, by contrast, is sealed only by the underlying vestiges (Stratum VIA). As stated above, no clear stratification was observed between the walls under discussion and the remains of Stratum IVA or even the later remains which had already been published. As a result, it is apparently possible to ascribe the southwestern remains to any of the strata postdating Stratum VIA.

The Northeastern Area

As stated, it is difficult to establish with any degree of confidence the stratigraphic relationship between the various architectural remains ascribed to Stratum

3. Fig. 1 combines elements from the HUJE and TAUE excavations (Strata VB and VA–IVB) with remains from the UCE work in Area DD (Strata VB and VA). The enumeration of the walls (DD1, DD2, etc.) is my own, and is designed for the reader's convenience. It is possible that further remains appearing in the Schumacher excavations report should also be assigned to this system, but this is difficult to establish.

VA–VB in this area. It is reasonable to assume that Wall DD2 (Fig. 1) is the western wall of Room 6001, which belongs to the western system of rooms attached to Palace 6000, and that they postdate the remains of Structure 6107 (as opposed to Wightman's reconstruction). Wall DD2 corresponds in both orientation and width (ca. 50–60 cm) to the walls of the row of rooms to the west of Palace 6000. As such, the room was ca. 5.2 m in width, which is similar to the width of the other two rooms. It is impossible to ascertain the method of construction of Wall DD2 in order to compare it to the special character of the walls of the western rooms, which consisted of nearly square ashlar. The two segments of the thin walls, DD2 and DD4, in the northeastern corner of Area DD, were not built in the same direction; it is possible, however, that this arises from adaptation to the line of the slope. The three-dimensional drawing indicates that Walls DD1 and DD2 should not be connected, but this is not a definitive conclusion, owing to possible "optical errors" resulting from the way in which three-dimensional plans are presented.

Most of the walls in this area apparently belong to a single system, which includes the thick Walls 5092 and 5065, and Walls DD6, DD7, DD8, and DD9. A unit consisting of thinner walls—5091, DD10, and DD11—is attached to Wall 5065 in the south. It is possible that Wall segment DD8 is the extension of the thick Wall DD9 in the south, which runs parallel to Wall 5092 in the east (as opposed to Wightman's reconstruction).

Wall 5092 is represented by two wall segments separated by a space (an entrance threshold? see Loud 1948: Fig. 278). A comparison between them reveals that the northern segment is narrow and differs in direction from the southern one, and it is also possible that their modes of construction are different. It is thus doubtful that both segments belong to the same stage, especially since Wall DD5, located at the northeastern end of the area, was apparently built together with and as the extension of Wall 5092 (north). Wall DD1, parallel to Wall DD5 in the north and of similar width, evidently represents the continuation of Wall 108 (Stratum VB) from the HUJE excavations. One has the impression that both walls belong to the same plan, but unfortunately this cannot be verified. Under the circumstances, it is unfeasible to make comparisons between the heights of the plaster floor of the entrance threshold and those of the floors exposed by HUJE in the western rooms, since the remains of the two areas are widely separated (ca. 7 m), and the height differential here between Strata VB and VA–IVB is minimal.

One should also take note of the striking architectural similarity between the corners of the two adjacent units—Structure 5065–5092 and Palace 6000—and the remains abutting these units from the south.⁴ These factors suggest that both structures were contemporaneous.

4. To the south of Palace 6000, near the western corner, a relatively small area was excavated (see Zarzecki-Peleg 2005: 41–42, Plan 9). The area was badly damaged. At the western edge two stones were uncovered which adjoin the southern wall of Palace 6000. They apparently represent the beginning of a wall that continues southward, in alignment with but narrower than the western wall of Palace 6000. This is clearly an architectural element adjoining the palace, and may perhaps hint at the existence of a southern wing.

The Southwestern Area

Although there is no juncture or clear stratigraphic anchor connecting the remains of both sections, the UCE archaeologists made an assumption that scholars have accepted without demur: namely, that most of the remains in the southwest belong to Strata VB and VA. I believe, however, that this ascription is wrong, and that most of the remains here should be ascribed to Stratum III Structure 490 (Fig. 2). In fact, Herzog (1992: note 63, Fig. 17), availing himself of aerial photographs, ascribed some these walls to the city plan of this stratum, but overlooked the fact that they already appear on his plan of Stratum VA (compare 1992: Figs. 15 and 17). This error probably resulted from a combination of factors: (1) the failure to take into account this area's particular topography and (2) the circumstance that the excavations of this structure were undertaken by different teams in divided areas and over seasons separated from one another by several years.

The surface in the area of the gate (west of Structure 490) is lower than that of its surroundings, and it slopes towards the city gate from three directions: east, west, and south. This topographic condition is expressed in the Stratum III drainage system. In the west, the steepness of the slope is stressed by Structure 1052 (the stepped construction of its foundations is visible in the photograph; Lamon and Shipton 1939: 71, Fig. 83). In spite of the differences in the depth of its wall foundations, it seems that the floors were uniform in height (Lamon and Shipton 1939: Fig. 89, Section A–B). South of the gate plaza, in Structure 1060 (Square N/9, Stratum III), the topographic irregularities were integrated into the structure; it was erected on two different terraces linked by five steps (1939: 63–64, Fig. 74). East of the gate, Structure 490 was constructed. One can assume that its wall foundations were far deeper in the west than in the east, where the surface rises considerably. It is possible that the builders of Stratum III damaged the earlier remains (Strata VB, VA–IVB, and IVA; it is probable that, owing to the steep declivity, some of the earlier remains had already been destroyed before the erection of Structure 490).

By combining the remains from the southwestern area of Area DD (Square L/11, Walls DD13–DD21) with those appearing on the plan of Stratum III in Area D—Structure 490 (Lamon and Shipton 1939: Fig. 89), one can see the overlap of some of the walls (compare Figs. 1 and 2). Such a combination reveals that the following walls can be identified on both plans: Wall DD13 and the eastern wall of Structure 490; Wall DD20 and the southern wall of Room 458, which was built on the same line. Furthermore, adjacent to the walls just noted, one recognizes in an aerial photograph (Lamon and Shipton 1939: Fig. 118) walls ascribed by the UCE to Stratum VA/VB: e.g., DD22, DD18, DD17, DD15, DD14, etc. On the same photograph a stone paving north of Wall DD14 can also be discerned. Wall DD13 (Loud 1948: Fig. 274, in the background of the photograph; taken from the east) was preserved to a considerable height, and probably reflects various building phases. At first glance it seems that the early stage was already erected in Strata VA/VB, while another wall was built over it later—in Stratum III. However, a more careful examination of the preceding photograph (Lamon and Shipton 1939: Fig. 118) reveals that most of the

walls appearing on the UCE plan as “Strata VB/VA” were actually built as a direct extension of Stratum III Structure 490. This reinforces the claim that the eastern wall of Structure 490 and Wall DD13 are one and the same. Without substantiation, it is difficult to accept the notion that most of the walls from Strata VB/VA persisted into Stratum III.

Structure 490—Stratigraphic and Architectural Analysis

A number of stages were visible in Structure 490 that are similar to those in Structures 1369 and 1052 (Reich 1975: 85; 2003; Wightman 1985: 121–22; Joffe, Cline and Lipschitz 2000). The several stages in the wall systems in the southwest—Square L/11—correspond to those in the public structures of Stratum III. These remains were published twice (Loud 1948: Figs. 277, 414), and a comparison of the plans indicates that the stratigraphic data are similar but not identical (see Fig. 3:1–2). In one of the plans (Fig. 3: 1), the two main systems are separated by graphic means. An analysis of the remains reveals that it is possible to identify four stages. From early to late, these are listed below.

Stage 1. Wall DD22 and the floor to its south, together with early Wall DD14. The excavators represent Wall DD22 (adjoining Wall DD14) with diagonal lines in the opposite direction. An examination of the section published alongside the plan reveals that Wall DD22 was abutted in the south by a floor which ran underneath Wall DD19 (Stage 2), even though the same plan depicts Wall DD19 as being parallel and contemporary to Wall DD14. It appears that the latter was initially in service together with Wall DD22, and later with Wall DD19. Wall DD22 was erected as a “sloping buttress wall” adjoining Wall DD14 to its north. Such stone buttresses along the outer walls of a structure are characteristic of administrative buildings in Stratum III (compare Structures 1052 and 1369).

Stage 2. Wall system DD14 and DD19 (diagonal lines in opposite directions).

Stage 3. Wall system DD18 and DD20 (in black). In the area of Wall DD18, it ostensibly appears that two walls (DD17 and DD18) were erected one atop the other; in actuality, however, this is an optical distortion arising from the three-dimensional drawing. The putative early wall comprises the lower courses of the same wall, which was cut by the installers of the basin (Stage 4).

Stage 4. The rectangular basin with the channel. The basin was installed next to Wall DD14, which runs to its north (Stage 1). The builders took this wall into account, but did not utilize it *as a wall*, since the basin is joined by a channel which cuts across the wall. The section drawing emphasizes Wightman’s determination that the basin and channel, together with the plaster floor abutting the basin (160.20 in height) and the fragment of another basin, all represent the latest stage among the elements appearing on the plans. These remains supersede Walls DD22, DD17, and DD18 (Stages 1–3).

It is possible that the western wing (including Room 494) represents an addition to the original plan, or (at the very least) a technical stage later than Wing 490. This fact is significant, since it comprises an important stratigraphic anchor: Room 494 was built over four-chambered Gate 500B and adjacent to two-chambered Gate 500A.

The main buildings of Stratum III—Structures 1369, 1052 and 490, and sometimes even the annexes—feature distinctive characteristics (see Fig. 2):

- Massive construction over a raised podium, and reinforcement of the lower section by a “sloping buttress wall.”
- A four-sided layout, including a wide central courtyard and rows of rooms on all sides, the row on one side being double. The rooms themselves are narrow broadrooms facing the courtyard.
- In a few rooms, stone slabs with horseshoe-shaped margins and a stepped profile were installed as door-sockets.
- Washrooms with niches in the wall and an efficient drainage system.
- A niche in the wall to the left of the entrance to Room 509, another in the porch (portico) to its north, and a niche each in Rooms 1368 and 490.
- In most of these structures, the entrance is located in the corner of the building (for a detailed discussion of these structures, see Amiran and Dunayevsky 1958; Reich 1975: 84–86; Fritz 1979; Wightman 1985: 121–22; Herzog 1992; Reich 1992).

Although it is possible to observe a degree of similarity between them, the plan of Structure 490 differs from that of Structures 1369 and 1052. Structure 490 is larger than the others, and comprises a number of units/wings. Inadequate knowledge of its various stages precludes undertaking a detailed architectural analysis, and thus I can only describe the units in a general fashion:

- Unit 1: A large unit, including the walls of Square L/11 and Rooms 452–58 at the eastern end.
- Unit 2: A reception unit (490), with a relatively small court(?) in front of the reception rooms (492).
- Unit 3: Rooms 491/494.

It is reasonable to assume that Unit 1 comprised the main structure of the “palace,” while Unit 2, including reception Hall 490, served as an annex adjoining or near the main structure (Structure 483, attached to 1052). Unit 3 was probably a later addition to the complex. If one accepts the interpretation of Room 490 as a reception hall, Structure 490 acquires unusual importance.

Summary

Remains of a public(?) structure—Building 6107—assigned to Stratum VB can be discerned between Area DD and Palace 6000. The reconstruction of its plan and size is difficult. The stratigraphic relationship between this building and Walls DD5, 5092 (and others) in Area DD is unclear. Furthermore, we cannot determine if the remains uncovered as “Building 6107” contain one or more construction phases. Wightman’s reconstruction, which connects the northeastern corner of Building 6107 with the southwestern corner in Area DD—Square L/11—is untenable. This article has stressed the discontinuity between the remains that appear on the plan in the northeast and those in the southwest in Area DD. One has the impression that most of the northeastern remains belong to a system of interconnected walls ascribed to Stratum VA–IVB, which includes the thick Walls 5092 and 5065, Walls

DD6, DD7, DD8, and DD9, while attached to them (that is, to Wall 5065) in the south is a unit comprising thinner walls—5091, DD11, and DD1. It is reasonable to assume that Wall DD2 is the western wall of Room 6001, which belongs to the western row of rooms attached to Palace 6000. There is considerable architectural similarity between the corner of Structure 5065–5092 and the southwestern corner of Palace 6000, whereby the structures are arrayed as two adjacent units (comparable in dimensions?). Both corners are abutted in the south by the remains of thinner walls, perhaps parts of the same structure attached to both units. One can assume that both were contemporary in Stratum VA–IVB. The function of the central area between those buildings is still unclear; perhaps it was an enclosed courtyard, or a constructed wing. In any case, this was an area of administrative-public buildings located to the east of the entrance to the city, in which stood special buildings which apparently fulfilled various functions: administrative, dwelling/offices(?), and/or ceremonial(?).

It follows that most of the remains in the southwest (Square L/11) in Area DD, formerly ascribed to Stratum VB and/or VA, actually belong to Structure 490 of Stratum III (no Stratum IVA remains were found in the southwestern area). It can be assumed that the wall foundations in the west of Area DD were much deeper than those of the walls in the east, owing to the steep slope. The fact that the bottoms of the structure's walls evince different heights and the discontinuity between the remains previously led to their incorrect ascription. The Stratum III city differs considerably from its predecessor—Stratum IVA. Structure 490 has special features in common with the other administration buildings (e.g., 1052 and 1369) of Stratum III, including a double row of rooms, drainage channels, and outer walls reinforced by sloping buttress walls. Nevertheless, it differs from the others by its number of units/wings and its plan, which is comparatively complex, and it is possible that this difference has functional significance.

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Ruin Cults at Iron Age I Hazor

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This contribution is offered to David Ussishkin, whose study of the Syro-Hittite ritual burial of monuments (Ussishkin 1970) still forms a basis for any discussion of ancient Near Eastern societies' perception of their past monuments and the ritual practices connected with them.

In a recent article, Doron Ben-Ami (2006) presented and discussed two cult-places of the Iron I excavated on the acropolis of Tel Hazor. Ben-Ami described the *bamah* excavated by Yadin's team in area B and the *masseboth* recently uncovered by the renewed excavations in area A, and discussed them within the larger framework of the processes which took place in the southern Levant in of the 12th–11th centuries B.C.E. Based on the various components of the two features, and comparisons to the “Bull Site” in northern Samaria, Ben-Ami briefly delineated the characteristics of Iron I cult. This can be defined as the practice of an open-air ritual that took place in high-elevation isolated sites, where offerings were placed around a single unworked standing stone (*massebah*) that served as the focus of an aniconic ritual activity. Ben-Ami concluded with a mention of one “unattended issue,” namely the occurrence of two cult-places located very close to each other on the acropolis of the ruined Canaanite city, and pointed to the problem of their chronological sequence (Ben-Ami 2006: 131–32).

In what follows, I wish to highlight several aspects of the Hazor cult-places that I believe deserve closer attention, and suggest a new framework within which the existence of these two features may be explained.

The Location of the “Cult-Places”

The exact location of the cult-places is of prime importance for interpreting their function (Ben-Ami 2006: Fig. 1). The newly discovered Area A cult-place was dug into the destruction layers of the Late Bronze Age ceremonial precinct, in the northeastern corner of its central courtyard. The top of the large standing stone (at 229.63 m asl) is somewhat higher than the pavement of the courtyard at this point (229.43 m asl), and the whole feature is dug into the accumulations of Late Bronze Age debris (Ben-Ami 2006: Figs. 2–3).

The Area B “*bamah*” is located on the higher western terrace of the tell, sealing a “thick wall” attributed to the earlier part of the Late Bronze Age (Yadin et al. 1961: Pl. XXXVIII:1). Its location (at 234.00 m asl) provides an excellent visibility point, overlooking the immense ruins of the Late Bronze Age ceremonial precinct in the center of the mound (Area A) and the royal complex on its northern slope (Area M)



Fig. 1. The Location of the Iron I Cult Places on the Acropolis (from the East).

(Fig. 1). It is worth noting that the Area A destroyed remains, consisting of layers of fallen mudbricks and burnt material, reached a level of 232.76/60, rising above some of the Iron Age remains in their vicinity. As noted previously (Ben-Tor and Rubiato 1999), the Iron Age inhabitants of Hazor avoided living in at least part of the area of the destroyed ceremonial precinct until well into the 8th century B.C.E. (Ben-Ami 2001; D. Sandhaus, personal communication).

We have, then, two cult-places located within view of the ruins of the Canaanite monumental buildings in the central part of the tell. One of these cult-places overlies the central courtyard of the Late Bronze Age ceremonial precinct, at “the heart of the Iron I occupation” (Ben-Ami 2006). The other is located somewhat farther away, but in a prominent position commanding the clearly visible remains of the Canaanite ruins and the full extent of the upper tell. The undoubtedly intentional placement of the two Iron I cult loci reflects the conscious appropriation of the Bronze Age remains by the Stratum XI inhabitants. These new settlers must have been aware of the magnificence of the site’s past and its violent end, and this awareness is betrayed by the location of their cult-places and their associated material remains as well.

The Masseboth

As correctly pointed out by Ben-Ami, a single ubiquitous standing stone was probably the cultic focus of both cult-places. In Area B the elongated stone should be reconstructed in the corner of a small structure, and in Area A it was free-standing and encircled by several smaller standing-stones and offering tables (Ben-Ami 2006: Figs. 2–3, 7).

A significant characteristic of these two *masseboth* is their raw material, namely, basalt. This hard and dark-colored stone, which can be found locally in the vicinity of Hazor, was used extensively in buildings attributed to the Late Bronze Age. In the Canaanite monumental buildings on Hazor's acropolis the incorporation of basalt orthostats in the walls and the floor was a common feature (Ben-Tor 1998; Ben-Tor and Rubiato 1999). The high level of craftsmanship and significant resources of manpower and time needed to work basalt stone corresponds with the means available to the Canaanite elite ruling Hazor during the Late Bronze Age and with their architectural and ideological aspirations. It is noteworthy that during the final phase of Canaanite Hazor—a phase of monumental building dilapidation and gradual abandonment—fragments of orthostats and broken basalt stones were torn from royal structures, buried in pits and used to block entryways and monumental spaces (Zuckerman 2007). Although basalt is commonly used for the manufacture of various vessels and implements throughout the Iron Age, finely worked basalt stones are uncommon and only seldom reused even in monumental Iron Age structures such as the six-chambered gate, the citadel and other administrative buildings in Area B (Ben-Tor 1989). It thus seems that the choice of two large basalt stones, one of them smooth and at least partly worked, is not coincidental. The ten small standing stones found beside the Area A large *massebah*, most of which are also made of basalt, lend further support to this intentional choice of raw material (Ben-Ami 2006: 125).¹ Basalt stones apparently acquired special value by the time they were chosen as the cult focus of the Iron I inhabitants of Hazor, and might have been salvaged from the ruins and admired as remnants of the city's distant and glorious past.

The Material Remains of Cultic Activity

The cult-place in Area B was defined as a “high place” on the basis of the supposed cultic finds attributed to the room and its vicinity (Yadin 1972: 132–34, cf. Finkelstein 2000). The ceramic assemblage consisted mainly of serving vessels (i.e., bowls) as well as cooking and storage vessels (Yadin et al. 1961: Pl. CCIII). A rich assemblage of basalt vessels and artifacts, used for food preparation, was also found in this area (Yadin et al. 1961: Pl. CCVI). The incense stands found throughout the area were the main reason for its initial identification as a cult place. Other finds include an Egyptianized hematite scarab, dated by Goldwasser to the Late Bronze Age or somewhat later (Goldwasser 1989: 341), several beads, weights and a bone inlay

1. It is probably not a coincidence that a row of ten basalt stelae (including the central incised one) were found in the niche of the Late Bronze Age temple excavated in Area C in the lower city of Hazor (Yadin 1972: 71–74).

(Yadin 1972: 132–33). None of those is necessarily cultic in nature, but all of them find their parallels in the Late Bronze Age repertoire of Hazor and were probably collected from the debris of the Canaanite monumental buildings (Yadin et al. 1961: Pl. CCIV: 6–17). The most important find attributed to the cultic area is the clay jug found buried in the southwestern corner near the standing stone. The circumstances of the jug's deposition were interpreted as either a foundation deposit or as later burial underneath the floor of room 3282 (Yadin et al. 1961: Pls. XXXVIII: 3–4; Yadin 1972: 132–34; Negbi 1989: 359–62). Ben-Ami's interpretation of the burial of the jug and its contents when the cult-place was abandoned seems convincing (Ben-Ami 2006: 127). The jug itself (Yadin 1961: Pls. XXXVIII: 3–4, CCV: 1) is of a well-known type characteristic of the Late Bronze Age (compare Yadin et al. 1961: Pls. CCXLI: 18, CCXCII: 16–17 from the Lower City). The bronze objects found in the jug, including the seated deity and the tools and weapons accompanying it, are reminiscent of Late Bronze Age types found in the earlier strata of Hazor (see for example Yadin et al. 1961: Pl. CCCXLII: 6). The figurine of the seated god closely resembles the typical bronze figurines of Canaanite deities found in the main temples of the Late Bronze Age city (Negbi 1976: 137–38). The figure need not be identified with Yahweh (cf. Ahlström 1975); it is, as most scholars today agree, a depiction of the Canaanite god El or Baal (Negbi 1989: 361–62; Lewis 1998: 43). All these objects were probably scavenged from the ruins of the Late Bronze Age royal precinct (Dever 1983: 574; Ilan 1999: 155–56; Lewis 1998: 43). They might have been collected as scrap metal, intended to be recycled and reused by the new inhabitants of the site (Negbi 1989: 360–61) or alternatively, collected and treated with veneration and respect for their long-departed past owners. In any event, their final intentional burial within the structure attests to the significance they still had in the 11th century B.C.E., at least two centuries after their original use.

The material assemblage connected to the Area A cult-place is much poorer, consisting of sherds of mundane pottery vessels, especially cooking-pots (Ben-Ami 2006 Fig. 6). A head of an animal figurine (Negbi 1989: Fig. 6), which was probably part of a composite vessel (*kernos*), and several votive bowls were found around the cult-place (Ben Ami 2006: 125).

Characteristic Iron I pits were found in abundance in both Area A and B (Yadin et al. 1961: Pl. XXXVI, Yadin 1972: 129–30, Ben-Ami 2001: Fig. 1). Most of these pits were filled with dark ashy material, large amounts of pottery sherds and bones, and broken basalt objects. They were sealed with stones, and Ben-Ami concluded that they were used as refuse rather than storage pits (Ben-Ami 2001: 166). I would suggest the possibility that these pits served for the intentional deposition of residues of feasting activities practiced in the context of the two contemporary cult-places. The fact that cooking-pots, large storage pithoi, and bowls were the most common ceramic finds in these pits lends support to their identification as ceremonial trash pits for the discarding of remains of commensal consumption.

Assessing the exact nature of the ritual activities performed in these cult-places is impossible on the basis of their material residues. It seems, however, probable that both rituals of burnt offerings (represented by the incense stands and offering tables) and ritual feasting were practiced in both areas.

"Ruin Cults" in the Early Iron Age Eastern Mediterranean

In light of the above observations, I suggest an interpretation of the two Iron I cult-places at Iron I Hazor as representing "ruin cults" performed by the new inhabitants amidst the still visible ruins of the former Canaanite metropolis. These impressive ruins served as a physical and active reminder of the glories of the past, to which ritual and social activities could be dedicated.

The concept of "ruin cults" is well known during the end of the second millennium and the beginning of the first millennium B.C.E. in the Aegean area, most notably in Post-Palatial Crete, and was also noted at the Early Iron Age strata of post-VI Troy. These phenomena will be briefly discussed below, as a means of elucidating the material features of ruin cults and their significance.

Several locations of cultic activity were discovered "amidst the ruins" of Minoan palaces or other monumental buildings at Knossos, Phaistos, Ayia Triada, Tylissos, Amnisos, Kommos, and Palaikastro (Prent 2005: 508–54). The ashlar walls of the palaces, some of which stood to a considerable height for centuries after their final destruction and abandonment, were the locus of ritual activities from the Early Iron Age and well into the Hellenistic period (Prent 2003).

A gap of centuries was identified in all these sites between the latest Bronze Age destructions and the later sanctuaries built on top of their remains, dated to as early as the 11th century B.C.E. and as late as the 7th century B.C.E. (Prent 2005: 509–12). According to Evans, habitation of the area of the palace at Knossos seems to have been avoided following its destruction, while remains of Proto-Geometric cultic activity were indeed discerned above the southwestern corner of the central courtyard (Prent 2004; 2005: 515–16). It should be stressed that the intentional choice of location of Cretan Iron Age sanctuaries on top of their Bronze Age predecessors is not taken to reflect uninterrupted continuity of ritual and cult. In fact, there are profound differences between the cultic activities immediately following the destruction of the Minoan palaces (dated to the LMIIIC and the Subminoan period) and those later sanctuaries used during the Proto-Geometric and later periods (Prent 2004). These later remains were attributed by several scholars to the Geometric Period revival of interest in, and "rediscovery" of, the past—the Bronze Age—which was considered a Heroic Age of venerated ancestors (Prent 2005: 638–41). As convincingly shown by Prent, the association of a site/area with an indigenous deity could be preserved for several centuries before cult of the deity was actively resumed (Prent 2003: 98; 2005: 642–43).

These sanctuaries also served as meeting places for members of different groups from the territories surrounding them, and as centers of cult and ritual used by the restricted groups of emerging elites of the island, in an attempt to associate themselves with the past exclusively (Prent 2003: 90). Traces of ritual activity reflect performance of collective dining and burnt animal sacrifices, as well as at the dedication of votive offerings. The latter consist of metal objects, especially different types of weapons and vessels. The nature of these votives reflects a military aristocratic ideology characterizing the newly established elite groups in the various regions of Crete during this period (Prent 2005: 638–43).

Another case of cultic activities performed in connection with Bronze Age ruined structures has recently been identified at Troy and discussed by Basedow (2007 and 2009) and Morris (2007). In this case, the destroyed structures of Troy VI, and especially the Pillar House and the South Gate, served as the locus of ritual activities. The visible ruined walls and pillars served as the context, if not indeed the actual object, of cult performed by the inhabitants of the earliest Iron Age settlement (Basedow 2006; 2007). The incorporation of standing earlier remains into later sanctuaries seems to be attested also in other Early Iron Age Aegean cases (Basedow 2006: 20). One feature characterizing these newly established cultic loci, especially in the area of the South Gate and its towers, are the standing stones, also defined as stelae or “baetyls” (Basedow 2009: 141–42). These monolithic blocks were erected outside the abandoned city gate and incorporated in the walls of the Iron Age settlement (Basedow 2009: Figs. 16.18–16.19; Morris 2007: 65–68). These reused blocks, which might have been scavenged from the ruins of the Bronze Age city, are interpreted as markers of sacred spaces and ritual sites in post-Troy VII contexts (Basedow 2007: 139). This function is reminiscent of the ubiquitous feature of the Hazor cultic places, namely, the erection of basalt standing stones as their central cult object.

Back to Hazor

At Iron I Hazor, the still visible remains of the destroyed Late Bronze Age precinct included mainly the huge mass of fallen mudbrick debris sealing Building 7050 (the “Ceremonial Palace”). Only fragments of Late Bronze Age walls were still visible above the surface. It is noteworthy that the ashlar stones of the “Southern Temple” wall were incorporated into the flimsy walls of the Iron I structures (Ben-Ami 2001: 156–58 Fig. 4). Although no clear indication of cultic or ritual activity was discerned in this area, the fact that the monumental walls of the Late Bronze Age were seen and reused by the later inhabitants is of significance.

This concept of ruin cults may serve as the basis for an explanation of several issues left unanswered by previous treatments of the Hazor Iron I cult-places. How should we explain the existence of *two* cultic sites in such a close proximity, within the context of a meager settlement which was defined as “a small un-walled village” (Yadin 1972: 134), or even as a temporary encampment on top of long-deserted ruins of the Canaanite city (Ben-Ami 2001)? What kind of ritual activity can be reconstructed on the basis of their location, their architectural features, and their material assemblages? I believe that the immense and still visible remnants of the violently destroyed Canaanite monumental edifices hold the key to the answer to these questions.

Does this interpretation help us reconstruct the identity of these Iron I settlers? Not necessarily. The suggested “ruin cults” could have been performed either by remnants of the Canaanite indigenous population that fled from the site in the 13th century B.C.E. and kept traditions regarding of the once thriving city and its violent end (as argued, for example, by Finkelstein). Alternatively, these rituals might be attributed to the new inhabitants of the site, the “proto-Israelites,” who were deeply impressed by the sheer size of the still visible remains on the acropolis. The

use of artifacts of Late Bronze Age origin, which were retrieved from the Canaanite ruins, and the ritual burial of the bronze objects hoard, reflect the rediscovery and appropriation of the past. However, without the help of contemporary texts it is impossible to define the exact attitude of the new inhabitants to these old remains. Do the material remains described above reflect a feeling of awe and respect for the age-old Canaanite ruins? Or should we rather envisage an emerging aniconic ritual ideology based on the active rejection of Canaanite anthropomorphic gods and a symbolic repudiation of their powers and efficacy (Ilan 1999: 206)? Does the carefully collected hoard of bronze objects represent offerings brought to the Area B cult-place as part of the rituals performed there, or should we interpret them as artifacts of metal waste, stowed away for future remelting or exchange? These questions must, in the absence of written documents, remain unanswered. But it is worth quoting here Sara Morris's observations concerning Troy: "The ruined city functioned as the primary backdrop to events imagined at Troy or rites performed before its walls. . . . For several centuries, the site was primarily a locus of pilgrimage and homage, a true 'landscape of memory,' prior to the Hellenistic revival of the site as a rebuilt city with a new temple to Athena" (Morris 2007: 65).

The destroyed Bronze Age remains of Hazor, in their prominent location on the tell, should be viewed as part of such a "landscape of memory" of the Iron Age inhabitants of northern Israel. Hazor, more than other sites in this area, thus became part of a value-laden ancestral landscape, rich in meaning for the societies living within it (Greenberg forthcoming). People who frequented the site treated the ruins with awe, which materialized in ritual activities performed amidst the ruins. These activities might be understood as acts of appropriation of the remains, and their constant reinvention and reinterpretation was later to be incorporated into a vivid biblical narrative of the fate of a once magnificent political and religious Canaanite center.

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The FIRE SIGNALS OF LACHISH

In this volume honoring Tel Aviv University archaeologist David Ussishkin, colleagues and students representing some of the major names in the field today present 25 essays on a variety of topics of interest to the honoree. The contributions cover a range of periods from the Late Bronze Age through the Persian period and disparate subjects such as Judahite bullae, destruction levels at Megiddo, a diversity of results from various tells in Israel (and one in Jordan), Egyptian influence on Canaan, the city of Jerusalem and its temple, and much on the archaeology of the Shephelah, an area of particular interest to the honoree—who is best known for his excavations at Tell ed-Duweir, the site of biblical Lachish. The volume takes its title from a reference in one of the Lachish ostraca.

From 1966 until his retirement in 2004, David Ussishkin taught in the Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at Tel Aviv University. Between 1975 and 1978, he served as Chair of the Department, and between 1980 and 1984 as the Director of the Institute of Archaeology. In 1996, he was nominated incumbent of the Austria Chair in Archaeology of the Land of Israel in the Biblical Period. He served as the editor of *Tel Aviv: The Journal of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University* for 30 years.

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Inset image: Library of Congress, LC-matpc-03321/www.LifeintheHolyLand.com
Cover design by Andy Kerr



EISENBRAUNS
POB 275
Winona Lake, IN 46590
www.eisenbrauns.com

ISBN 978-1-57506-205-1



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